TMF

September 1988

THE MAC FLYER-For Greater Safety in MAC Air Operations

317th TACTICAL AIRLIFT WING

All about Pope AFB . . . page 16

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THE MAC FLYER - For Greater Safety in MAC Air Operations

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Flying with Shack

There's only one way to fly "right."

By Maj. Lucian A. Dade
86 FTS, Laughlin AFB, Texas

I was a second lieutenant, a T-37 instructor pilot, and intensely proud of both titles. I'd graduated from Pilot Instructor Training (PIT) only weeks before; from UPT a few months before that. I was now an "old head"—I knew what I was doing and eager to pass on my vast store of knowledge to my first students. And what students! Everything they did was wrong, and with each mistake I thought less and less of them—and myself more and more an expert.

It was the Friday afternoon flight with Capt. Willard that changed my mind about all of that. Everybody called him "Shack," with obvious respect for his expertise at dropping lethal steel on the enemy over North Vietnam. He'd just come back from Southeast Asia after flying F-100s in the war. I thought anyone with that kind of experience was a (not so minor) god.

I was hanging around the SOF desk looking for an opportunity to demonstrate my superior flying skill. It was Friday, but still too early to head for the club. I found myself standing next to Captain Willard who was also scanning the schedule board. I stood, basking in the great man's glow, trying to imitate his hard-bitten squint while I tried unsuccessfully to learn anything of value from the grease covered board. I was startled as a low growl, ending in a profane curse from my hero, attracted my attention.

"Hey kid . . . what're you doin' hangin' round the desk? Looking for a chance to slip the 'ol surlies?"

Trying to act nonchalant at being addressed by such an august personage, I calmed myself and responded, "Yessir . . . I thought I'd . . . ahhh . . . that is I . . . ."

"Okay, quit babbling and get yer junk . . . we'll take the 1536."

I glanced at the SOF for confirmation but, without a word, he shrugged and moved to post our names next to the indicated aircraft. I hurried to catch up with Captain Willard—after I had completed the sign-out sheet. I found him in the "chute" shop waiting, not very patiently. Trotting alongside to keep up with his long stride, I noticed several things about his equipment. His flight helmet, not in a bag, was covered with plastic tape of a gaudy green, brown and black camouflage design. His flight suit was highly modified, including lack of a survival knife pocket. It was faded and stained—marks, obviously, of many years and innumerable sorties. His flight gloves ended a long way from the sleeves of his flight suit, partly because they were rolled up almost to his armpits and partly because the gloves had been hacked off at the wrist—apparently with a rather dull knife.

Determined to make a good impression, I scurried to begin my walkaround. Just as I was about to duck under the right wing, I heard someone pounding on the side of the aircraft and shouting. I straightened up and looked into the cockpit. There sat Captain Willard, fully strapped in.

"What'cha doin', kid?"

"I'm . . . er . . . ahhh . . . doing my preflight, sir . . ." I stammered.

A stream of almost unintelligible profanity blasted me in the face, something about the taxpayers having already bought the airplane, so what was I going to do, buy it again? Only the last part was completely clear ". . . what're ya tryin' ta do . . .? insult the °f$%° crew chief? Get in the °f$%° airplane!"

I just had time to cram into

THIRD PLACE
1988 MAC FLIGHT SAFETY WRITING CONTEST

the right seat before Captain Willard began the start sequence. I tried to follow his movements as I struggled to strap myself in, but couldn't find anything familiar in what he was doing. To my eyes it seemed he simply waved his hands over the instrument panel in a more or less random pattern, gave the "chocks" signal, and we were on our way. The crew chief seemed just as befuddled as I, running from one side of the aircraft to the other, attempting to keep up with the frantic pace of Willard's signals. I don't know how we finally got airborne as I spent most of the time going over my personal connections and the instrument panel, trying to make sure everything was as it should be.

Once in the air, Captain Willard's methods became, if anything, even stranger. I'd never seen anybody who flew an entire sortie with his oxygen mask hanging from the side of his helmet instead of connected on both sides, but this, apparently, was the norm for Willard. The only reason this disturbed me was he hadn't changed his communications panel over to "cold mike," thus all the considerable noise from the old Tweet's uninsulated cockpit was routed through his microphone directly into my headset. He kept up a steady banter throughout the flight, but I missed a great deal of it in the noise. I caught snatches of conversation centering around lewd jokes or a running commentary on the idiocy of air traffic controllers. I'd assumed he kept his mask hanging for the sake of comfort . . . after all, in 20 or 30 minutes the mask can become unbearable if not properly fit. He cleared up this misconception when, after leveling-off at 6,000 ft (more or less) on the departure, (I never saw the altitude stabilize for more than a few seconds within 300 or 400 ft of our assigned altitude), he reached into the leg pocket of his flightsuit, extracted the biggest cigar I've ever seen, and lit it with a gold lighter bearing his initials in mother of pearl. Even with the cigar billowing smoke throughout the cockpit, he didn't seem to touch the stick except when he wanted the aircraft to change attitude. He would fondle the cigar lovingly, remove it periodically from his mouth and study it with the concentration of a scholar trying to decipher ancient hieroglyphics. Most of his movements seemed to have nothing to do with flying the aircraft.

He allowed me to fly twice during the sortie. Once, to recover the aircraft from a spin he had entered at the top of an Immelmann (I'm sure it was to test my no-notice spin recovery skill); the other, when we first entered the traffic pattern. I flew the first pattern and, I must say, did a credible job of flying a textbook ATC pattern. Bobby Debusk (my PIT IP) would be proud of me, I thought, as I rolled out exactly on altitude, on speed, aligned with the runway. Captain Willard's patterns demonstrated just how much I had to learn. Resembling a Split S more than a final turn, they apparently made the RSU crew as nervous as I. (Each time we were sent around I vaguely heard, over the cockpit noise, Captain Willard's assessment of the controller's ancestors, his mother's part time employment, or thinly veiled threats of what Willard would do to the poor oaf when we got back to the squadron.)

At last it was over. We were back in the chocks, with the forms filled out. I thought I had performed pretty well, flying a beautiful no-notice spin recovery and one textbook traffic pattern. I waited to hear Captain Willard's

thoughts on how well I was doing, his praise for the super smooth way I'd handled the aircraft. When his debrief came, it was a withering barrage of criticism, centered around the fact I had been too chicken and too young to get in on the war (my fault, obviously), and that I'd been duped into thinking that the "ATC way" of flying airplanes was the right one (foolish me). He also projected that, if I lived "til I was two hundred and six, I might . . . just might . . . someday learn to fly."

I was crushed. I had tried so hard. This man I respected so much had not a good word to say about me as a pilot . . . in fact, I'd noticed he had avoided using the word pilot in connection with me at all, as though I were still a student. I put my gear away and wandered back to the flight room. No longer was I looking forward to going to the bar for a Friday night of fun. No longer was I dreaming of the day I too could become a seasoned fighter pilot. The only feelings I had were bitterness, rage, and hate. How could I hope to measure up if I was so far off the mark after 18 months of working so hard, practicing so much?

I threw myself into my chair in the flight room—the chair I had coveted so much as a student, the chair that meant I had made it, that I was an IP. How could I have been so wrong? I felt, rather than heard, someone enter the room. That's all I needed, more harassment. I turned to see Capt. Larry Quigley, the Assistant Flight Commander, with a beer can in each hand.

"Did you just fly with Shack?"

I nodded in dumb confirmation.

"Then you probably need this." He handed me one of the beers and opened his own. "How did it go?"

Slowly at first, then with increasing relief, I poured forth the facts of the sortie, and then my own frustration and feelings of incompetence and failure. After a long time, there was silence in the room.

Captain Quigley smiled and shrugged. "Do you know why everybody calls Willard, 'Shack'? Think it's because he hit the target every time on the range or in combat? Nope. As a matter of fact, I doubt he's ever thrown a shack bomb, in practice or in anger. That nickname resulted from a combat sortie he'd led. Only those in his four-ship know exactly what went on. There was something about a FAC sending the whole flight home when Willard sprayed bombs and napalm over the South Vietnamese countryside. Willard spent a long time in the RSU after that, and because he'd demonstrated he couldn't hit the broadside of a barn, everybody started calling him 'Shack.' There were several guys in our outfit in SEA who, I swear, would have preferred kissing Lady Jane rather than going into combat on Willard's wing. Did you notice this is the end of the quarter? Know why he picked you to fly with? 'Cause most of the experienced IPs in the squadron won't fly with him. He needs the sorties for his requirements. Look, the regs and supervisors tell you how the Air Force wants its aircraft flown. You have two choices, fly 'em that way, or fly 'em like Willard does. If you fly like he does—act like he does (watch him at the club tonight), you'll end up like him—if you're real lucky—passed over several times, and forced out involuntarily. If you're not so lucky, you'll end up as part of a hillside somewhere. Worse, you'll take some poor unsuspecting WSO or crew with you. It's your choice; you have to make it every day, every time you strap in. You don't have to give me an answer, you'll have to answer to yourself. Are you going to be the next generation's Shack Willard? Look, I've flown with you and your students. You have the potential to be a fine instructor, a really excellent pilot. But not if you follow Willard's lead. Pay attention to the things that are important—your flying skills and your students'. Make your own choice, set your own goals. Don't let guys like Willard do it for you. C'mon, let's go see who's at the club."

I walked out of the building feeling better than before. Maybe I'd be okay after all. And maybe those students of mine would make it fine. I found myself thinking, as I followed Quigley out to the parking lot, maybe these students need nothing more than a little more time to practice . . . I'll bet my buddy IP could suggest another technique that would help.

That was almost fifteen years ago, and I've tried to remember the lesson Larry taught me that Friday afternoon. On the whole, I've been successful. But there's a larger moral in this story, one it took me a long time to find. Shack could have had a positive effect on me. An encouraging word, a careful analysis of what I was doing wrong, a smile, would have spurred me along the way Larry Quigley did. But Shack chose to leave his mark on a young lieutenant in another, no less indelible, way. He chose to poke fun, to make me feel that I'd never make it, that I was a fool for listening to the safety officer and the squadron commander when they talked about discipline. I'm glad Larry was there to straighten me out. I used to try hard to learn everything there was to know about flying. Now that I'm a supervisor, I work hard to make sure the young pilots and students who fly with me won't need a guy like Larry Quigley to undo my bad example. If you're a supervisor, think about it. *Are you a Larry Quigley or a Shack Willard?* ✈

Maj. Lucien A. Dade entered pilot training in 1972. He has served as T-37 IP at Williams and Randolph Air Force Bases, and is a C-141 AC. He is a senior pilot with over 3,000 flying hours in the T-37, CT-39, C-141 A&B, C-12 and T-38. Major Dade holds a Master of Arts degree in Management and has attended Squadron Officers School and Air Command and Staff College.

Learn to live with your . . .

Shortcomings

Any system, regardless of the number of safeguards built into it, has its shortcomings. This is especially true of the fluid and dynamic U.S. air traffic control system. This system, with its complex array of electronic equipment, still relies on the premise that people must practice a vigilant scan for other aircraft. Understanding the shortcomings of both electronic and human elements of this system is essential for crewmembers to do their jobs—and survive.

This premise was reinforced 20 January 1987 when at 1228 Central Standard Time (CST), a U.S. Army Beech U-21A airplane, Army 18061, collided in midair with a Sachs Electric Company Piper PA-31-350, N60SE, at 7,000 ft MSL over the Lake City Army Ammunition Plant near Independence, Missouri. The collision site was approximately 5 miles east of the eastern boundary of the Kansas City Terminal Control Area. Two pilots and one passenger aboard the U-21 and the lone pilot and two passengers aboard the PA-31 were fatally injured. Both airplanes were destroyed.

Flight History

About 0745 CST the Sachs Electric PA-31 departed Spirit of St. Louis Airport en route to Kansas City International Airport. The purpose of the flight was to transport company executives to Kansas City to conduct company business. The pilot of N60SE obtained a preflight weather briefing and filed an instrument flight rules (IFR) flight plan before departure. The pilot declined an offer from the flight service station (FSS) employee to record information for an IFR flight plan for the return trip later that day.

The flight to Kansas City was conducted in visual meteorological conditions (VMC) and the airplane arrived at Kansas City IAP without incident. After dropping off his passengers, the pilot flew to Kansas City Downtown Airport to wait for his passengers and the return trip to St. Louis. There is no record he received a weather briefing or filed any type of flight plan for the return trip.

N60SE departed Runway 19 at Kansas City Downtown Airport at 1221 CST under visual flight rules (VFR). The pilot advised the local controller he would make a left turn to the east after departure. The pilot's acknowledgment of the controller's approval of the left turn was the flight's last known radio transmission.

Army 18061 departed Calhoun County Airport, Anniston, Alabama, en route to Sherman Army Airfield, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. The flight's purpose was to transport an Army general of-

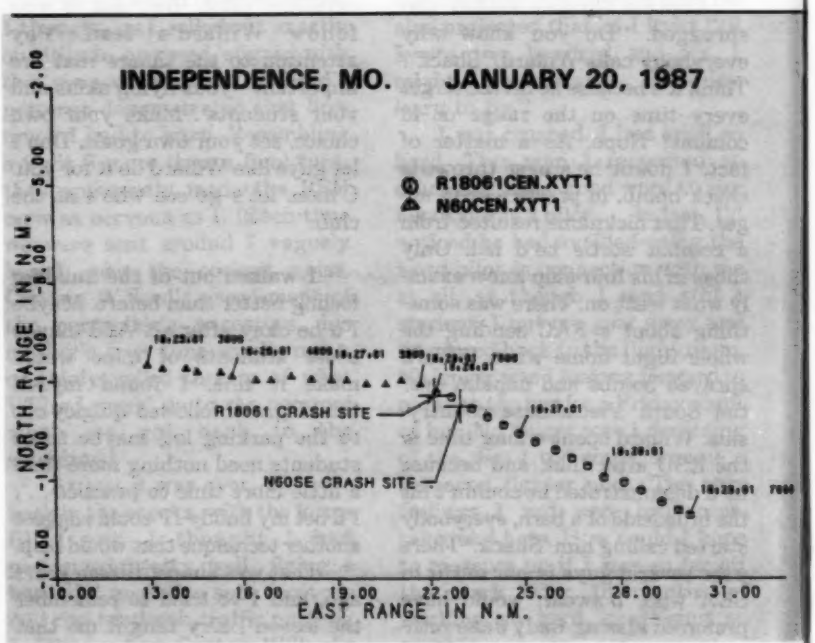


Figure 1. Tracks of N60SE and Army 18061 plotted from Kansas City ARTCC radar data.

ficer to Fort Leavenworth. The flightcrew checked the forecast weather and was briefed before departure. No discrepancies were noted during preflight inspection. The IFR flight plan route was: direct Muscle Shoals VOR, direct Dyersburg VOR, direct Maples VOR, direct Napoleon VOR, and direct Sherman AAF at an assigned altitude of 8,000 feet.

At 1218, Kansas City ARTCC cleared Army 18061 to descend to 7,000 ft and provided the Kansas City altimeter setting. Army 18061 leveled at 7,000 ft and was handed off to Kansas City TRACON East radar controller. The East Radar controller advised Army 18061 to expect a visual approach to Runway 33 at Sherman AAF and provided the Sherman AAF weather: sky clear, visibility 10, wind 260 at 7 knots, and altimeter 30.26.

At 1222:34 Army 18061 was instructed to proceed directly to Kansas City VOR and depart the VOR heading 310 degrees. The crew acknowledged the clearance. At 1225:09, Army 18061 was advised of traffic (identified by the East Radar controller as a twin Cessna) at the flight's 12 o'clock position, 5 miles, at 8,000 ft, IFR, and southwest bound. At 1225:23, the Army flightcrew reported traffic in sight. There were no further radio transmissions from 18061. Radar contact with the U-21 was lost about 1228.

Examination of radar data confirmed the traffic advisory to Army 18061 did not pertain to N60SE. Radar data indicated Army 18061 didn't noticeably alter its heading after it turned toward the Kansas City VOR, and maintained 7,000 ft until radar contact was lost following collision with N60SE.

Analysis

Finding no deficiencies in the pilots' lifestyles, the airplanes, or procedures used by ATC controllers, the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) investigated this accident and focused on the reason two highly qualified crews didn't, or couldn't, see each other in excellent weather conditions and the reason controllers didn't ensure proper separation.

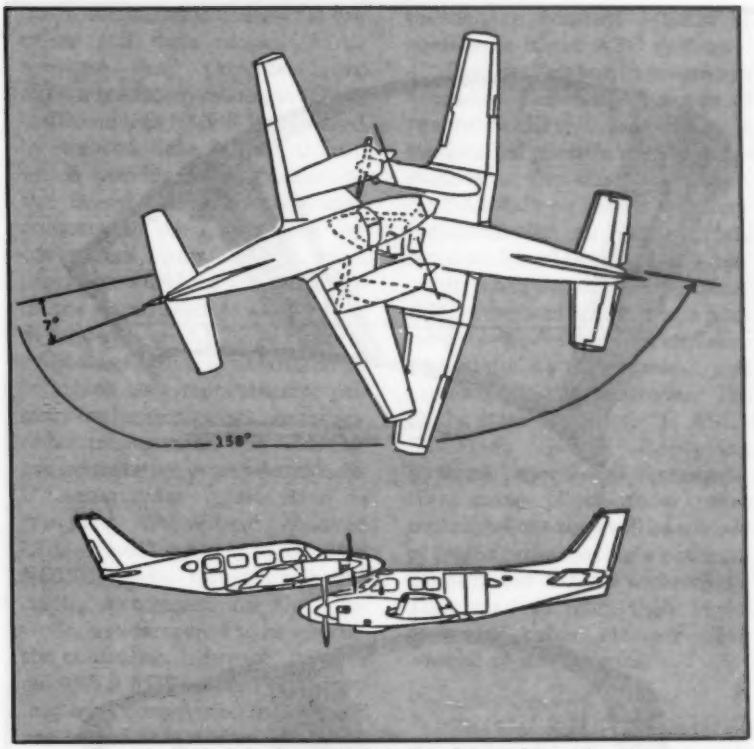


Figure 2. Horizontal and vertical relationship of the airplanes at impact.

Using smoothed radar data, the Board used a National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) computer program to calculate performance parameters such as airspeed, ground speed, roll angles, and acceleration loads. (The program is useful for calculating long-term airplane motion, but abrupt maneuvers can't be reconstructed.) It revealed no significant changes in airspeeds or ground tracks. N60SE was maintaining about 140 KIAS on a ground track of 093 degrees and a heading of about 086 degrees. Army 18061 was maintaining about 190 KIAS on a ground track of about 296 degrees. N60SE was climbing at about 1,066 fpm and Army 18061 was level at 7,000 ft MSL. The airplanes' tracks, plotted from Kansas City ARTCC radar data, are shown in Figure 1.

The near equivalence of the approach angle of 157 degrees, (derived from radar data), and the collision angle of 158 degrees, (derived from the wreckage by vector analysis), showed the airplanes collided at approximately the same angle at which they converged. This evidence revealed that evasive action was either not taken, or initiated too late to prevent collision. The PA-31, which had been climbing, actually passed in front of and was rising above the cockpit of the U-21 as the airplanes collided as depicted in Figure 2.

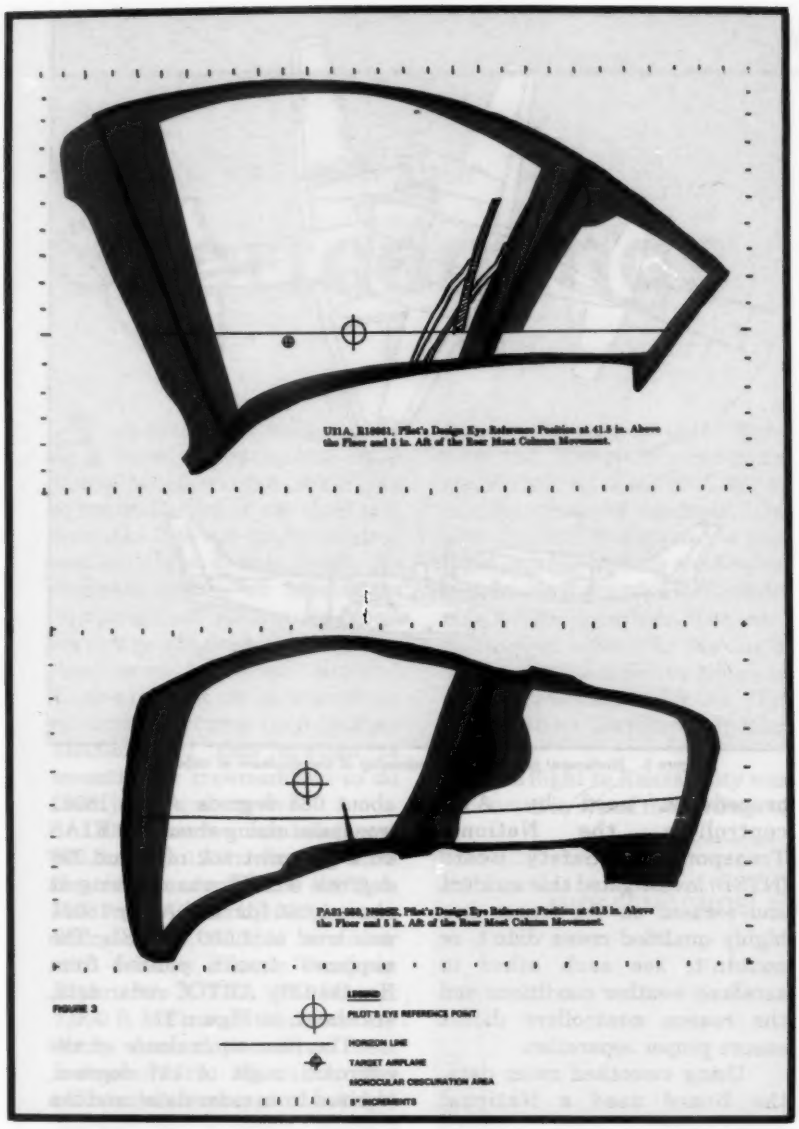


FIGURE 3

The Board conducted a cockpit visibility study to determine the location of each airplane with respect to the field of vision of the pilot(s) in the other airplane. Binocular photographs were taken with the camera located at a "pilot's design eye reference point." The view from the opposite pilot seat was determined by reversing the photographic image. Automated Radar Terminal System (ARTS) III and NASA program data showed both airplanes maintained very stable flightpaths in the last minutes before colliding. These data also revealed negligible target movement in the pilots' field of vision for more than 60 seconds before the collision.

The cockpit visibility study revealed that:

1. The PA-31 would have appeared about 13 degrees left and 2 degrees below the U-21 pilot's eye reference points. Since the U-21 was in level flight, the horizontal axis of the eye reference points would have been the horizon. There were no cockpit obstructions that would have obstructed the view of the PA-31 from either pilot seat.

2. The U-21 would have appeared about 18 degrees right of the PA-31 pilot's eye reference point and about 2 degrees above the horizon. However, it would have appeared about 3 degrees below the PA-31 pilot's eye reference point due to the PA-31 pitch attitude in the climb. The center windshield post would not have completely obstructed the pilot's view of the U-21, but would have restricted the pilot to monocular (left eye) view of the U-21 (assuming no head movement). Movement of the pilot's head forward or to the left would have restored a binocular view of the U-21. The view of the U-21 would not have been obstructed from the right pilot

seat.

3. The sun was not in the normal field of vision of the pilots of either airplane.

See and Avoid

Since it's clear both airplanes were wholly or partially visible to each other, why did this collision occur?

To find the answer, the Board examined ATC procedures, equipment, and the See and Avoid concept of aircraft separation.

VFR aircraft, in this case N60SE, do not normally receive air traffic separation services from controllers unless those services are specifically requested. Under most circumstances, VFR aircraft aren't required to maintain communication with ATC facilities during the en route phase of flight. The pilot of N60SE wasn't obligated to request air traffic services or be in communication with either Kansas City TRACON or ARTCC at the time of the accident. Separation of IFR and participating VFR aircraft from other participating aircraft is the first priority of the ATC system, along with providing safety alerts. The Board determined greater emphasis by the FAA on the advantage of using air traffic control flight-following services on VFR flights would help reduce the midair collision hazard.

However, the Board also believed ATC computer equipment could have contributed to the accident. ARTS tracking systems superimpose computer-generated alphanumeric symbology over the primary and secondary radar target information on controller radarscopes. Tracking radar targets and distinguishing IFR from VFR targets is much easier using ARTS information rather than the primary and secondary radar information also displayed. Most traffic is controlled using what are called full data blocks (FDB) because they provide more alphanumeric symbology. Since traffic such as N60SE is identified by limited data blocks (LDB), which provide less information, the Board believed LDBs may sometimes be overlooked by controllers, particularly when controller workload is high or vigilance reduced. Controller dependence on ARTS III target symbology could cause controllers to attach less importance to primary (radar skin paint), secondary radar (transponder), and LDB target information even when Mode-C transponder information is provided. The Board believed LDB symbology associated with N60SE's radar target was sufficiently prominent on the controller's radarscopes to be seen by the controller. However, reliance on ARTS FDB radar symbology may have contributed to their failure to see target symbology associated with N60SE.

Failure of East Radar controllers to provide timely traffic advisories and a safety alert to the U-21 crew placed that IFR flight at the same midair collision risk as VFR aircraft not using FAA flight-following services. The Army pilots, perhaps unknowingly, became completely dependent on their own ability to "see and avoid" other airplanes, with all the inherent limitations of the "See and Avoid" method of avoiding inflight collisions. At the same time, they reasonably assumed the radar controllers weren't particularly busy (not much radio communication and excellent weather conditions), and would alert them of conflicting traffic. Such reasoning would have been reinforced by the traffic advisory provided to them about three minutes before the collision. Under the circumstances, the pilots may have been particularly vulnerable to such an accident because of confidence in the ATC system.

This confidence, expressed as a concept known as diffusion of responsibility, describes a tendency of pilots in some circumstances to relax their vigilance. A NASA study on midair collisions indicated that an inappropriate sense of shared responsibility may occur when an airplane is under ATC radar control. That is, a pilot relegates a portion of his vigilance responsibility for seeing and avoiding to the controller. The study states, in part, "If ASRS (Aviation Safety Reporting System) reports are representative, many pilots under radar control believe they will be advised of traffic representing a potential conflict and behave accordingly. They tend to relax their visual scan for other aircraft until warned of its presence."

Probable Cause

The National Transportation Safety Board determined probable accident cause was the radar controller's failure to detect conflict and issue traffic advisories or a safety alert to the U-21 flightcrew; deficiencies of the See and Avoid concept as a primary means of collision avoidance; and lack of automated redundancy in the air traffic control system to provide conflict detection between participating and nonparticipating aircraft.

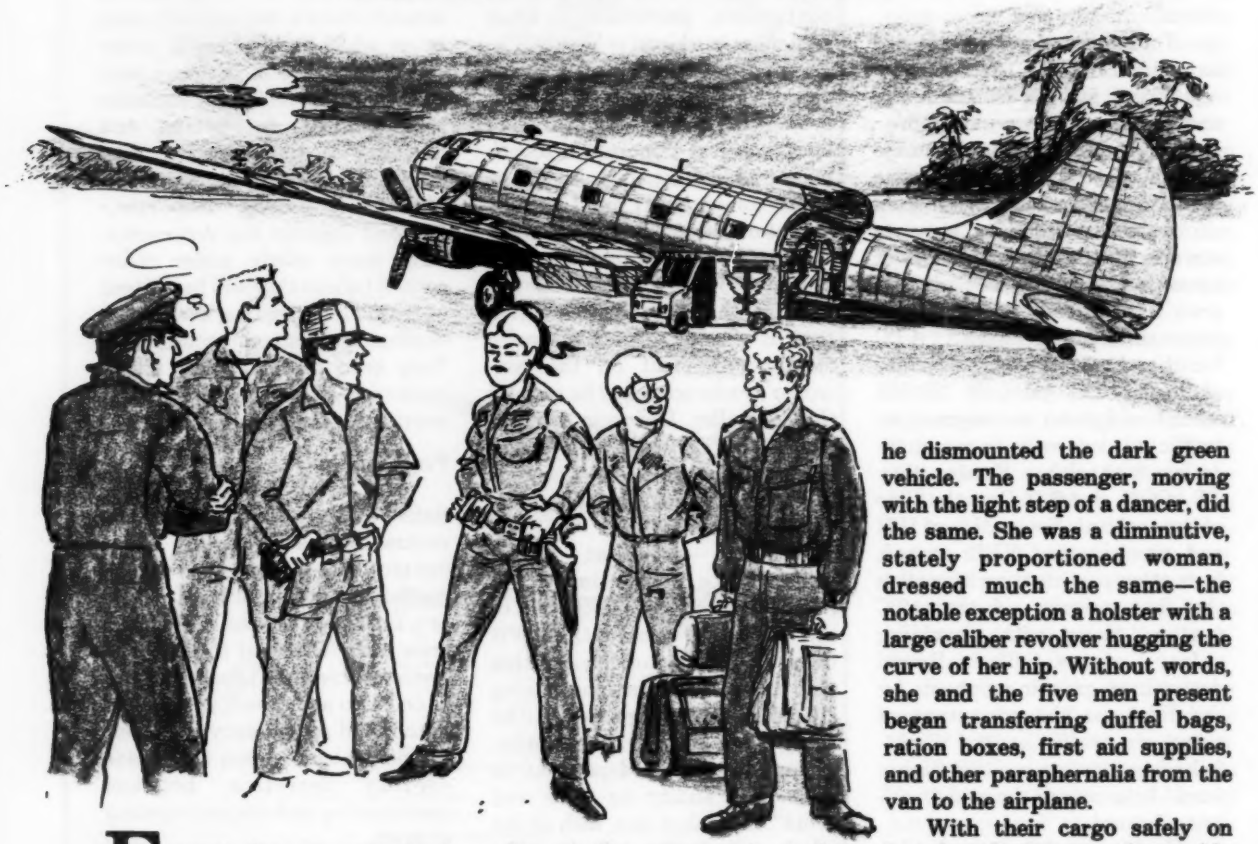
Application to MAC

MAC crewmembers are certainly susceptible to the same physical and psychological limitations as the pilots involved in this accident. What we must keep uppermost in our minds is the fact there will *never* be a perfect air traffic control system protecting us from every potential midair collision threat. The ultimate responsibility to avoid a midair lies with *you*.

Adapted from: *NTSB/AAR/88-01*

The Extraction

Old soldiers never die. They just need rescuing over and over again.



Except for an occasional grunt, the shadowy figures worked silently in the pale Florida moonlight, loading box after wooden box aboard the ancient Commando. One figure, a tall man with the stub of an unlighted Dutch Meisters clenched in his teeth, occasionally glanced at the luminous numbers on his old GI watch. He walked to the nose of the venerable airplane, at apparently the appointed hour, and stared intently at the dark pines silhouetted against the night sky at the west end of the abandoned airfield. Seeing two almost imperceptible flashes from among the trees, he replied with two of his own from the shielded flashlight he held in his burly right hand.

Running without lights, the van emerged from the trees and rolled to a stop 20 ft from the airplane's cargo door. The driver, a man dressed in an old style military flightsuit and almost as tall as the cigar chewer, seemed to uncoil from the left front seat as he dismounted the dark green vehicle. The passenger, moving with the light step of a dancer, did the same. She was a diminutive, stately proportioned woman, dressed much the same—the notable exception a holster with a large caliber revolver hugging the curve of her hip. Without words, she and the five men present began transferring duffel bags, ration boxes, first aid supplies, and other paraphernalia from the van to the airplane.

With their cargo safely on board and the van thoroughly camouflaged among the trees, the small group gathered off the airplane's left wingtip. Removing the cigar from its seemingly fixed position between his teeth, with only the lowering moon providing illumination, the cigar chewer addressed his confederates, "Due to the sensitive nature of this mission, I felt it best to wait until we were all together before giving you a full explanation. I'll fill you in on the details in a moment, but I'd like to thank each of you now

for the sacrifice you're making. It must have been tough for those of you with families, Sam, Torque, and Downs, to take off from your own endeavors on a mission like this, with no words of explanation to your loved ones. Blinky, we're going to need your navigational expertise, and I'm glad you could make it. Taylor, I gave you a hint of what we're going to do, and I wish I'd had a whole wing full of folks as willing to put their loyalty on the line as you. Just one question—you know how to use that thing on your hip?"

"Honey chile, I've handled weapons a *lot* bigger than this," replied Tassels Taylor, slapping the .44 magnum strapped to her hip. Dropping the southern accent, she added, "Now cut the sentimental crap and let's get down to business, Fang."

"Right. We all know that about a year ago, one of our former comrades was criminally shot down by the 'Revolutionary Peoples Republic of Northern San Jose Jimenez,' while on a charter flight in his company's Skymaster. Fortunately, the airplane went down along the river forming the border with neighboring, friendly Southern San Jose Jimenez, and his copilot was able to avoid capture by swimming the river. She told me he started for the river too, but turned back to retrieve something from the wreck and was captured. Well, his active duty misadventures may have caused my ulcer to flare up more times than I can count; but no pipsqueak, slime ball, scurrilous bunch of crud piles are going to let one of my comrades rot in some pestilence-infested hole." Letting that sink in for a moment, Fang added, *"We are going to penetrate the capital city of Madre de San Jose Jimenez, and that slime pit they call a prison, to extract retired Air Force Major C. R. Terror."*

"I'll drink to that, Sir!" exclaimed Ty Downs, C. R.'s long-time loadmaster.

"We're running short on time," Fang continued, "so I'll brief as much as possible on the flight to Southern San Jose Jimenez. We have some 'friends' waiting there with more equipment, but the final push will be all ours. Our call sign will be Caribbean Resupply Transport 066. Saddle up."

"One question, Fang," Blinky said. "Where did you get all this stuff?"

"Where the ($*%&%(#()# do you think?" he profanely replied.

"Oooooohhh, I see," Blinky responded, his bespectacled eyes widening.

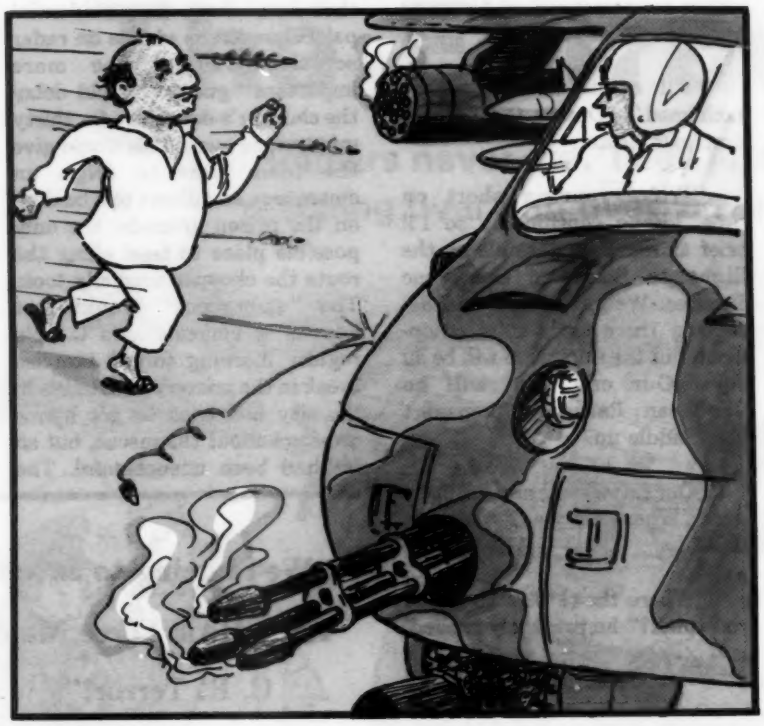
During the flight, Fang briefed his compatriots on the plan. Their initial destination—a remote jungle base camp occupied by counter-revolutionaries fighting the Northern San Jose Jimenez military junta. The rebels had managed to steal a new model Red Bloc HOGLEG troop-carrying attack helicopter from the docks of Madre de San Jose Jimenez. The HOGLEG, equipped with the latest in weaponry and electronics, was the ideal vehicle for the mission. With Fang and Long Suffering Sam, both experienced chopper pilots at the controls, they would fly a circuitous route and penetrate at tree-top level, stopping only once en route, for fuel at a secret rebel fuel cache.

Using terrain-masking techniques, they would penetrate the capital's radar coverage at the precise location the morning flight (returning overnight "guests" to their home from the presidential palace) would be visible on radar screens. One of the more important "guests" would delay the chopper's departure for thirty minutes, no more. This would give the team time to feign an emergency and divert to a landing on the prison grounds, the only possible place to land along the route the chopper normally took. The "emergency" would just happen to coincide with C. R.'s regular morning forced exercise break in the prison yard. Rebels in the city had tried to get him a message about the rescue, but so far had been unsuccessful. The team, with only one shot available, would have to go in and pull it off anyway. After picking up their passenger, and the element of surprise gone, they would make a straight line for the border, hopefully reaching it before the Northern San Jose Jimenez Air Force could react.

"We're going to extract retired Air Force Major C. R. Terror!"

Fang, who had spent a tour training Southern San Jose Jimenez Air Force members, spoke the local dialect like a native, and would handle the radios. Also, there would just happen to be a flight of Southern San Jose Jimenez F-5s on "routine" patrol in the area covering their border crossing point.

Blinky would help with navigation and act as right gunner, Max Torque as flight engineer and crew chief, Ty Downs as left gunner, and Tassels as



medical technician.

Upon arrival at the remote base camp, the team was greeted by the camp commander, Colonel Mucho Gusto. He greeted each member with a warm, "Buenos dias, Senor!" until he got to Tassels, when all he could mutter was "Caramba!"

"All right team, listen up," Fang said in his inimitably warm manner. "Sam, you and I and Torque will check out the chopper; Colonel Gusto's men will show the rest of you to your tents. Get some sleep. We jump off tomorrow at 0330."

Sam, Fang, and Torque went over the HOGLEG with a fine-tooth comb, checking systems operation, the somewhat non-standard instrumentation, and refueling procedures. They found it fully armed, with .50 caliber machine guns in each door, air to ground rocket pods under each winglet, two air-to-air Sparinsky infrared missiles on each winglet tip, and a 7.62 minigun and 40 mm grenade launcher turret in the nose. Making only one modification, they mounted a sound system with powerful speakers in each door. Leaving nothing to chance, they took it on several short hops, returning to camp to land in an area the same size as the prison yard, marked off by poles the same height as the prison walls. After three approaches, landings, and departures, they were satisfied they had "the picture" down pat.

Despite the relentless jungle heat, the team slept soundly, intensely aware of their mission's importance and the risks they were undertaking.

After a fine breakfast prepared by Colonel Gusto's personal chef, the colonel himself wished each team member a sincere "Buena Suerte!" Shaking Tassel's hand last, he could be heard muttering in Spanish as he walked away, "With a woman like that to inspire me I could conquer the world."

Using night vision goggles until the imminent tropical dawn made them unnecessary, they flew over the seemingly endless and unbroken jungle toward their fuel stop, occasionally dodging solitary vultures out looking for a free meal.

Homing on the short range beacon at the fuel site, the team hovered at tree-top level while part of the jungle canopy collapsed as the rebels took down camouflage netting. With a portable generator powering a small pump, the refueling took only minutes.

With Sam and Blinky providing expert navigational assistance, Fang precisely guided the HOGLEG to the radar pickup point. As if on cue, the Madre de San Jose Jimenez radar monitor requested flight identification and destination. Fang provided both, along with several ribald comments concerning the "VIPs" he was supposedly carrying; eliciting a hearty chuckle and a "Si, si," from the radar operator.

Nearing the prison, Fang notified the controller of a "minor" malfunction and told him he would land on the broad lawn in front of the prison. When queried, he replied his mechanic could quickly remedy the problem and not to notify his easily irritated "commandante" or request any assistance. With another chuckle, the controller gave him the equivalent of an "Okay."

With the prison yard coming into view, Sammy peered intensely ahead, trying to pick out their quarry. "Holy cow, Fang, look at all those guys. They must have every prisoner in the country in that yard."

"Don't sweat that. We'll find him," he replied as he brought the HOGLEG to a 2-ft hover in the yard.

The chopper's arrival naturally generated considerable commotion among the prisoners and guards. Guards, confused by the helicopter's presence but comforted by the familiar markings on its fuselage, milled about. Eyeing the machine guns and minigun being swept in arcs by the helo's crew, they remained at a respectful distance.

"C.R., honey, get your little round butt on this chopper so we can vamoose!"

Grabbing the mike, Fang broadcast his warning and demands over the loudspeakers in Spanish which, translated, meant, "Drop your weapons or you and this place will only be memories. We want your gringo prisoner—C. R. Terror."

With that, the guards in the yard dropped their weapons, but two more burst from the guard barracks with a rocket-propelled grenade launcher. After breaking through the gaggle of prisoners and other guards, they quickly attempted to reach a firing position, but rapidly thought better of their actions as deadly warning bursts from Ty Down's .50 and Sam's minigun convinced them of their foolhardiness.

Meanwhile, C. R., not yet beyond "Uno mas burrito, por favor," in his mastery of the Spanish language, was just as bewildered and confused as the guards and the rest of the prisoners. He did perk up, though, when he heard his name emanate from the loudspeakers. His bewilderment vanished as Tassels grabbed the mike from Fang and, in her honey-dripping southern accent, broadcast, "C. R. honey, get your little round butt on this chopper so we can vamoose."

The realization of what was happening hit C. R. so hard he almost swooned. But, with the resolve and strength of character he was so well noted for, he fought his way through the teeming mass, screaming, "Tassels, m'little pigeon, I knew you'd never desert me."

Scrambling aboard the hovering helicopter, he fell into Tassel's exquisite embrace. Looking around the helo's cabin, he began to recognize other faces. "Blinky, Ty, Max," and looking into the cockpit, "Sammy! But—who else?"

Fang, ever-present Dutch Meisters clenched in his teeth, turned to face C. R. and said, "Hello, Terror."

Recognizing his old nemesis, C. R. could only mutter a weak, "Wha . . .? Fang!" before fainting dead away.

"Enough old home week, Fang. Let's get the hell out of here," yelled Tassels.

The rest of the mission, but for a nasty little altercation with a Northern San Jose Jimenez Army HOGLEG requiring expenditure of two Sparinsky missiles, went exactly as planned.

After returning the HOGLEG to Colonel Gusto, and wishing him farewell and a warm "Muchas gracias," they left him sighing forlornly on the dusty airfield as he watched Tassels board the Commando.

After the short flight to the Southern San Jose Jimenez capital of Padre de San Jose Jimenez, the team, with a refreshed C. R. Terror in tow, was comfortably ensconced in the Imperial Plaza Hotel.

As they gathered around a large table by the pool, with C. R. and Tassels seemingly joined forever at the hands, Fang opened the discussion.

"Terror, I'm glad everything worked out well. None of us got so much as a scratch. But what exactly happened when you were shot down?"

"Well, we were following the river to our destination and we came to a big island not on our chart, so we circled it a couple of times to get our bearing, and all of a sudden . . . ."

"What!" exclaimed Fang. "That must have been Tio de San Jose Jimenez Island. These two countries have been fighting over that island for ten years. What kind of charts were you using?"

"Uh, well, they came with the airplane. I thought they might be a little old, but . . . ."

"You idiot," Fang roared. 'A little old . . . Oh, my ulcer," he moaned, heading for his room.

"Now, C. R. honey," Tassels crooned. "Don't let him get you upset."

"Nothing could upset me now, m'little pigeon. Absolutely nothing." ✦

Flying-Hour Milestones

7,500

301 MAS
Lt. Col. Conrad S. Biegalski
Maj. Ralph W. Dyer
Maj. John G. H. Jackson
CMSgt. Richard P. Costello
CMSgt. Robert E. Fuchs
CMSgt. Robert C. Kofalk
SMSgt. Eldon L. Cunningham
SMSgt. Scott S. Kennedy
MSgt. Harley K. Irish
MSgt. Robert S. King, III.
MSgt. George R. Kramm
MSgt. William C. Potter
MSgt. James H. Steelquist
MSgt. Carl J. Thielen

313 MAS
Col. Franklin A. P. Frenette
Lt. Col. Donald L. Smith
SMSgt. Charles J. Winchester
MSgt. Neil J. McClane
MSgt. James A. Shadoff

914 TAG
Lt. Col. Edward M. Colwell
Lt. Col. Kurt C. Novak
Lt. Col. Lorin L. Rockwell
SMSgt. Eric F. Renaud

21 AF
Col. Clinton L. Noren
Col. Joseph A. Petrazio, Jr.
Lt. Col. Peter A. Filandro
Lt. Col. James E. Peel
Lt. Col. Roland L. Wolfe, Jr.
Lt. Col. Matthew Zarkowski
Maj. Raul Contreras
CMSgt. John L. Dodds
CMSgt. Richard L. Pothier
CMSgt. Paul E. Roy, Jr.
CMSgt. Phillip E. Schutz
CMSgt. Carl L. Sellers
SMSgt. Gary R. Briscoe
SMSgt. Thomas F. Diaz
SMSgt. James P. Dotson
SMSgt. Joseph R. Ochranek
SMSgt. Theodore J. Schafer
MSgt. Charles S. Alexander
MSgt. Peter J. Forbes, Jr.
MSgt. Martin P. Friedland
MSgt. Donald M. Paulsen
MSgt. Steven A. Thornburg
MSgt. William J. Tobler
MSgt. David E. Williams

22 AF
Lt. Col. Robert Tittenhofer
CMSgt. CLifford W. Causer
CMSgt. Jerry L. Harvey
CMSgt. Philip L. Sigler
SMSgt. Dirk Alta
SMSgt. Daniel F. Paumier
SMSgt. Dana M. Snider
SMSgt. Michael L. Wright
MSgt. Stephen M. Clark

23 AF
CMSgt. David B. Kuykendall
CMSgt. Fred T. Elliott
SMSgt. Ignac Radvanyi

440 TAW
Col. Woodrow Fail
Col. Terry Whitnell
Lt. Col. Stephen Gradinjan
SMSgt. Keith Doorn
MSgt. Paul Hill
MSgt. Richard Wall

730 MAS
Lt. Col. John N. Goutas
Lt. Col. Claude G. Jackson
CMSgt. Calvin Gowens
SMSgt. Roy R. Arakaki
MSgt. Peter A. Carlson
MSgt. Alfred Lopez
MSgt. Charles E. Vanbeuklom

130 TAG
Lt. Col. Robert G. Bradley
CMSgt. William R. Spradling
SMSgt. Robert D. Chandler

22 MAS
Lt. Col. Robert H. Ikelman
Lt. Col. Terry C. Strickland
Lt. Col. Willis E. Pembleton
CMSgt. Robert R. Lowdermilk
MSgt. Martin H. Bartling
MSgt. Harry C. Cashwell
MSgt. Horace Jenkins

21 TAS
Lt. Col. Herbert W. Nakagawa
MSgt. Donald K. Holcomb
MSgt. Steven M. Peavey

772 MAS
Col. Lowell G. Fathers
TSgt. Frank J. Young

773 TAS
CMSgt. Juan M. Levario
MSgt. Charles E. Bucher

5,000

21 AF
Col. Felix F. Moran, III.
Lt. Col. Ronald E. Bukevicz
Lt. Col. Jack G. Griffith
Lt. Col. Dean Huntington
Lt. Col. Darrel A. Massey
Lt. Col. Clark J. Sprinkle
Lt. Col. John Teske
Maj. John S. Chase
Maj. John L. Cirafici
Maj. Albert Durning
Maj. David B. Ingersoll
Maj. James W. Johnson
Maj. John A. Morgan
Maj. David B. Mullis
Maj. Bruce Nichols
Maj. Steven A. Seats
Maj. Garrison Smith
Maj. Jack M. Snyder
Maj. Roger W. Sorenson
Maj. Robert J. Wicke
Maj. Peter P. Zapalo, Jr.
Capt. Barry E. Gottshall
Capt. Donald P. McDermott
CMSgt. Howard A. Hadley
SMSgt. James I. Gummere
SMSgt. James M. Hynes
MSgt. David N. Anderson
MSgt. Reginald M. Browne
TSgt. Mark L. Buchner
TSgt. Henry G. Crannell
TSgt. Leon J. Kurcewicz
TSgt. Edward Mack, Jr.
TSgt. William J. Niedzwiecki
TSgt. Michael W. Tedford
TSgt. Kenneth P. Thomas
TSgt. William R. Wingett
SSgt. Mark E. French

22 AF
Lt. Col. Alexander W. Golly
Lt. Col. Richard H. Gray
Lt. Col. Robert R. Hotaling
SMSgt. Robert E. Paynter
MSgt. Paul N. Feuz
MSgt. Galen E. Guenther
TSgt. Mark D. Ulm

23 AF
Maj. LeRoy J. Hult

440 TAW
Col. Heinz Poellet
Col. William Roewer
Lt. Col. Kingston Bowen
Lt. Col. James Hanny
Lt. Col. Robert Rick
Maj. Thomas Cordell
Maj. Frank Dethloff
Maj. George Kohn
Maj. Neil Miller
Maj. Bernard Pieczynski
SMSgt. Osbee Sampson, Jr.
MSgt. Dick Brue
MSgt. Albert Hurlbutt
TSgt. Randall Reynolds

730 MAS
Maj. Charles P. Gilmore
Maj. John D. Irvin
MSgt. Noah D. Kang, Jr.
MSgt. Daniel R. Mathews
TSgt. George J. Viglio, Jr

135 TAG
Lt. Col. John C. Schnell

130 TAG
Col. William L. Fleshman
Maj. Herbert W. Smith, Jr.

22 MAS
CMSgt. Larry L. Brandon
MSgt. Dwayne C. Adams
MSgt. Pamela L. Barnes
MSgt. Michael G. Branes
TSgt. Rick B. Bowen
TSgt. Michael E. Crwthon
TSgt. Donnie R. Gaut
TSgt. Thomas A. Holley
SSgt. James M. Bailey
SSgt. David C. Cheesum
SSgt. John S. Ehara
SSgt. Kenneth C. Hansen
SSgt. Willie E. Harris

463 TAW
SMSgt. Richard W. Stratton, Jr.
SSgt. Richard G. James
SSgt. Michael L. Jenkins
SSgt. Danny K. Leow

22 MAS
Lt. Col. Gary D. Laxx
Lt. Col. Robert H. Sheets
Lt. Col. Clifford D. Sassman
Lt. Col. Peter C. Kaminski
Maj. Darda B. Clark, III.
Maj. Laurance M. Lamothe
Capt. Thomas H. Evans

21 TAS
MSgt. John R. Lowry
TSgt. Anthony R. Atkins

2,500

730 MAS
Lt. Col. Earl B. Stitt, III.
Maj. Paul S. Breaher
Maj. George N. Clements
Maj. Barry E. Cooper
Maj. Brian W. Davis
Maj. James C. Dickinson
Maj. Robert M. Harkins
Maj. Glen S. Hughes
Maj. Donald D. Hultin
Maj. Phillip A. Jones
Maj. Kim Laronda
Maj. David P. Mueller
Maj. James R. Rosenbaum
Maj. Lewis C. Shrader, Jr.
Maj. James V. Strzyzewski
Maj. Ted M. Thompson
Maj. Dan T. Elliott
Maj. James S. Grandcolas
Maj. Lawrence A. Prentke
Maj. Donald G. Vise
Maj. Theodore L. Wittmann
Maj. Robert V. Blanton
Maj. Ronald L. Fluitt
Capt. Keith C. Arrol
Capt. Mike Chavez
Capt. Karl T. Erickson
Capt. Felix R. Gray

Capt. Keith C. Hall
Capt. Mark L. Hansen
Capt. John W. Hedges
Capt. John L. Holmquist
Capt. Thomas B. Kovitch
Capt. David W. Lonczak
Capt. William C. Marshall
Capt. Richard G. Wyatt
CMSgt. Larry L. Sammons
MSgt. Peter A. Blackstead
MSgt. Patrick K. Fujishima
MSgt. Michael A. Hardie
MSgt. Eugene M. Ledgerwood
MSgt. Roger F. Mann
MSgt. Anthony C. May
MSgt. Marvin G. Meyer
MSgt. David R. Myers
MSgt. Keith L. Norlander
MSgt. Frank E. Owen
MSgt. Richard A. Reibel
MSgt. James K. Ristau
MSgt. Paul T. Saenz
MSgt. Jose Sin, Jr.
MSgt. John E. Stacey
MSgt. Carl D. Striler
TSgt. William C. Canty
TSgt. Steven D. Ferry
TSgt. Dana R. Gallagher
TSgt. Lonnie R. Kimball
TSgt. James E. McGowan
TSgt. Alberto Murguia
TSgt. Stanley J. Puremba
TSgt. Frank E. Shaw
TSgt. Robert C. Ziegler
SSgt. Sterling L. Bryson, Jr.

HQ MAC/XP
Lt. Col. Thomas A. Hebblewhite
Maj. William C. L'Hommedieu
Maj. John C. Brockman
Maj. Robert M. McCarthy
Maj. Charles F. Schreck

130 TAG
Maj. Alvin L. Emch

22 AF/DO
Lt. Col. Peter K. W. Dang
Maj. Robert H. Doan
Maj. Robert L. James
Maj. Richard D. Martel
Maj. Michael Roberts
Maj. Steven R. Robinson
Maj. Lawrence Smith
Maj. Robert Sutley
Maj. Steven R. Thurgood
Maj. Alan H. Woodruff
Capt. George M. Christensen
Capt. Michael L. Redley

463 TAW
CMSgt. Alan N. Bridgestock
SMSgt. William A. Casey, Jr.
MSgt. John W. Carter
MSgt. Adolfo Gutierrez, Jr.
MSgt. Gerardo J. Gutierrez
MSgt. Clyde D. Owen
TSgt. Ronnie B. Gilbert
SSgt. Glenn E. Arai
SSgt. Geoffery Firebaugh
SSgt. Philip M. Rifenbury, Jr.
SSgt. Donald B. Sawyer

772 TAS
Lt. Col. Shanon P. Dunlap
Lt. Col. Keith R. Grant
Lt. Col. Len R. Heimer
Lt. Col. Marvin E. Mitzel
Lt. Col. Francis G. Ortiz
Lt. Col. Steven F. Tomhave
Lt. Col. John H. Wilson
Maj. John M. Davenport
Maj. John A. Petro
Maj. Robert E. Worley
Capt. Richard J. Beitel
Capt. Wayne D. Clever
Capt. Steven C. Elsesser
Capt. Roger L. Hollowell
Capt. Val J. Laughlin
Capt. Douglas A. Mumm
Capt. Michael R. Nellan
Capt. Daniel E. Richter
CMSgt. Allen D. Daugherty
CMSgt. Willie E. Elder
CMSgt. Richard L. Robley
MSgt. Ordean C. Anderson
MSgt. Lawrence A. Hill
MSgt. Daniel E. Hines
MSgt. John P. Sousa
MSgt. Leslie E. Squires
MSgt. James K. Wiggins
TSgt. Jose G. Ortinceleatino
TSgt. James K. Slaughter
TSgt. William A. Smith
SSgt. Charles R. Alfred
SSgt. Larry V. Gildewell
SSgt. Raymond Guerrero
SSgt. Raymond P. Higgins
SSgt. Daniel M. Kwasniewski
SSgt. Joseph D. Rapley
SSgt. Enrique Saucedo
Sgt. Gregg A. Smith

22 MAS
Lt. Col. James R. Bettcher
Lt. Col. Richard S. Hefner
Lt. Col. Gary E. Hohnen
Lt. Col. Wayne F. Laessig
Lt. Col. Thomas C. Stassen
Lt. Col. Oakly L. Risser
Maj. Stephen R. Back
Maj. Terry A. Canon
Maj. Alan A. Kirchhoff
Maj. James R. Moore, Jr.
Maj. David M. Spannbauer
Maj. William R. Swenson
Maj. Glen E. Tapio
Maj. Alwyn A. Walton, Jr.
Maj. Richard M. Wibbeler
Maj. Lonnie R. Williams
Maj. Alan H. Woodruff
Capt. James B. Butler
Capt. Lynn A. Conklin
Capt. Steven D. Cornell
Capt. Gary M. Dobbins
Capt. Brian D. Egan
Capt. David L. Hamrock
Capt. Joseph V. Fagan, Jr.
Capt. Don M. Roberson
Capt. Michael D. Rydjord
Capt. Gregory Tholt
SMSgt. Robert M. Turner
SMSgt. Lloyd L. Shull
MSgt. Ronald A. Banik
MSgt. Christopher R. Dellinger
MSgt. Richard L. Ele
MSgt. John D. Hogan
MSgt. George R. Horn, II.
MSgt. Steven H. Huchaermeir
MSgt. George A.Jacobs
MSgt. Thomas F. Low
MSgt. Joseph F. Martin, Jr.
MSgt. Kenneth L. Minnick
MSgt. Michael A. Pryor
MSgt. James L. Reddington
MSgt. Scott Rogers, Jr.
MSgt. Mark E. Raymond
MSgt. Gordan D. Tomlison
MSgt. Arthur R. Walker
MSgt. David L. Wickliff
TSgt. John L. Young
TSgt. Jeffrey Zwicker
SSgt. Howard E. McBound
SSgt. Benjamin H. Olivier
SSgt. Robert D. Smith
SSgt. Christopher L. Wike
SSgt. Scott P. Winslow

7 MAS
Lt. Col. Keith A. Betsch
Lt. Col. William M. Cassidy
Lt. Col. Oliver H. Heely, Jr.
Lt. Col. Robert E. Kimmel, Jr.
Lt. Col. Kirby A. Woehst
Maj. David E. Ambrose, III.
Maj. Terry J. Brust
Maj. Cameron M. Crawford
Maj. Robert W. Crist
Maj. Robert J. Hampson
Maj. David C. Moulds
Maj. Robert E. Nichols
Maj. Hugh A. Parker
Maj. Robert A. Reese
Maj. Larry B. Woodburry
Capt. Gregory M. Acuna
Capt. Mark E. Horkulic
Capt. Stewart D. Irwin
Capt. Judith A. Kramer
Capt. Kevin A. Locke
Capt. Michael A. Redley
Capt. Eugene Sneed
Capt. Larry S. Wallace
SMSgt. Barry L. Crocker
SMSgt. Kerry D. Hardy
SMSgt. Jack A. Kitterman
SMSgt. Errol G. Palmer
SMSgt. William A. Tkcas
MSgt. Richard G. Brooks
MSgt. Wallace L. Garron
MSgt. Arthur W. Jones
MSgt. Carl W. Jones
MSgt. Gregory R. Jones
MSgt. Rick A. Kastner
MSgt. Earl H. Rummel
MSgt. Charales H. Souder
MSgt. Terry W. Steen
MSgt. Rick A. Stills
MSgt. Michael H. Sullivan
TSgt. Robert S. Allen
TSgt. Ronald E. Brown
TSgt. Steven F. Cahoon
TSgt. Gerard J. Cicio, Jr.
TSgt. Alix Clermont
TSgt. Dusin P. Dugan
TSgt. Hilario E. Flores
TSgt. Mark E. Gaboury
TSgt. James L. Harbison
TSgt. Lyle K. Inscho
TSgt. Robert I. Jenkins
TSgt. Herbert N. Jones
TSgt. Martin N. Labeon
TSgt. John A. McClelland, III.
TSgt. Otis L. Peasant
TSgt. Mark P. Ratigan
TSgt. Richard C. Ricks
TSgt. David K. Sirmo
TSgt. Richard H. Smith
TSgt. Franklin Taylor
TSgt. Glenn T. Tucker
TSgt. Philip A. Young
SSgt. Wayne Barrett
SSgt. Thomas E. Barton
SSgt. John F. Brashear
SSgt. Gabriel L. Escamilla
SSgt. James L. Hess
SSgt. Thomas J. Langdon
SSgt. Ronald D. McNeill
SSgt. Thomas K. Stone
SSgt. Gary Way
SSgt. Larry B. Williams
Sgt. Gabriel D. Marquez

21 TAS
Lt. Col. Gary J. Machovina
Lt. Col. James P. Dwyer
Maj. John M. Calvert
Maj. David D. Dyche
Maj. Edward S. Koszykowski
Maj. Michael P. St. George
Maj. Steven J. Vreeland
Capt. Eric R. Bussian
Capt. Edward J. McIntire
Capt. Daniel T. Mullinix
Capt. Stanley C. Smith
Capt. Christopher M. Stahldrcher
SMSgt. Thomas J. Biggart
SMSgt. William J. Simpson, Jr.
MSgt. James D. Packer, Jr.
TSgt. Gil Sison Brito
TSgt. Falvoress Jones, III.
TSgt. Walter Gibson
TSgt. Michael D. Hartke
TSgt. Marco I. Lagos
TSgt. William K. Mackson
TSgt. John P. McGlade

Ranks and units are those at time of award.

Pope's main ramp.

Pope AFB and the 317 TAW

In the midst of the action.

By Maj. Thomas C. Weinzierl
Supervising Editor

In this latest installment of our continuing travelogue series, we focus this month on Pope AFB, North Carolina, home of the 317th Tactical Airlift Wing. With its 53 C-130E Hercules, and literally surrounded by the U.S. Army's Fort Bragg, home of the 82d Airborne Division, Pope is truly the "hub of tactical airlift."

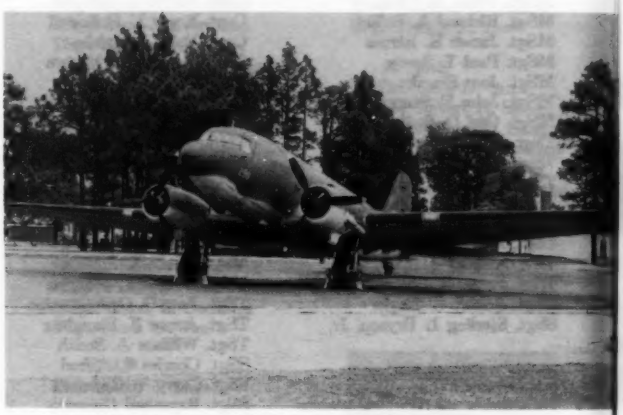
Besides working everyday with paratroopers from the 82d, Pope crews also perform the entire scope of tactical airlift missions including Container Delivery System (CDS) and Low Altitude Parachute Extraction System (LAPES) to drop cargo.

For those unfamiliar with this tactical airlift alphabet soup, CDS is used to drop as many as 16 cargo containers (weighing up to 2,200 lbs each) on a single pass over a drop zone.

LAPES is definitely one of the more exciting (and highly accurate) aerial delivery techniques. Three parachutes yank a load from a Herk flying only 5 to 10 ft above a relatively flat extraction zone. Loads weighing as much as 35,000 lbs can be delivered in an area 20 to 50 ft wide and 400 to 500 ft long.

Of course, the backbone of the 317th's operation is the venerable Herk. Although it's been around for over 30 years, the Herk is still the world's premier tactical airlifter. With a maximum peacetime takeoff weight of 155,000 lbs, carrying up to 9,680 gallons of fuel, the C-130 can transport 92 combat troops, airdrop 64 fully-equipped paratroops, or carry 74 litter patients and two nurses in a medical evacuation role. The Herk can carry 49,000 lbs of cargo, and airdrop cargo loads ranging from 200-lb packages to 35,000-lb vehicles.

In use by over 50 other countries, the Herk has been a country builder for many of them, airlifting heavy equipment into remote areas to build airports, roads, search for oil, and transport local products to market. Herks from many nations routinely fly mercy flights throughout the world, speeding food, clothing, shelter, doctors, nurses, and medical supplies in, then moving victims out.



The C-47 "Gooney Bird"—part of Pope's heritage.

No discussion of Pope is complete without mention of the XVIII Airborne Corps and the 82d Airborne Division, located at Fort Bragg, adjacent to Pope. The XVIII Airborne Corps was originally activated as the II Armored Corps at Camp Polk, Louisiana, in 1942. It was redesignated the XVIII Corps the following year. Principal Corps subordinate units are the 82d Airborne Division, the 24th Infantry Division, Ft. Stewart, Georgia. the 101st Air Mobile Division, Ft. Campbell, Kentucky, and nearly a dozen other units.

The 82d Airborne Division is one of the nation's principal quick reaction forces. The Division is manned and trained to deploy with no advance notice, to any trouble spot in the world, *fight*, and *win*. All division equipment—mortars, artillery, antitank weapons, trucks, ammunition, and medical supplies—can be airdropped into a battle zone.

With battle experience in three wars, the 82d's most recent combat action was the October 1983, Grenada rescue operation. The division deployed two

brigade-sized task forces which rescued American citizens, defeated a hostile force, and helped restore peace and order to the Caribbean island.

Due to its proximity to the 82d and Fort Bragg with its huge training area, Pope is logically a hotbed of tactical airlift activity and training. This was evidenced by exercise MARKET SQUARE II, which was underway during my visit.

MARKET SQUARE II was the largest joint airborne training operation planned this year. MAC participation involved 55 aircraft, including 24 C-141s from the 438 MAW, McGuire AFB, NJ; the 437 MAW, Charleston AFB, SC; the 63 MAW, Norton AFB, Calif; 62 MAW, McChord AFB, Wash; and one C-5 from the 436 MAW, Dover AFB, Delaware.

Fourteen thousand paratroopers from the 82d participated in the exercise, which took place at Fort Bragg and nearby Camp MacKall. Airborne operations were also conducted at Petersburg Airport and Fort Pickett, both in Virginia.

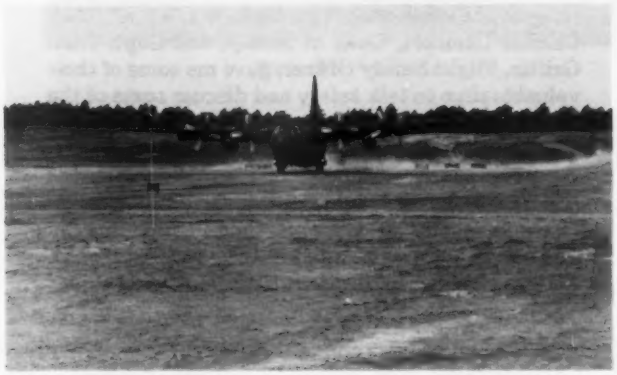
With all that activity in and around Pope, safety naturally becomes a very big concern. To get the lowdown on Pope's flight safety story, I went to those in the know—the Pope flight safety staff. Maj. Charles Lambert, Chief of Safety, and Capt. John Griffin, Flight Safety Officer, gave me some of their valuable time to talk safety and discuss some of the challenges they face in a very complex environment.

"The airspace around Pope is really congested and getting worse," said Captain Griffin. "Raleigh-Durham (about 50 miles north) is expanding by adding a runway and going international. Fayetteville just initiated an ARSA—Airport Radar

Combat Control Team on the job at Luzon LZ.

Above and below. Ramp repairs and construction proceeding at a heavy pace.

No computers, no timing, just eyeballs and judgment.



The cycle continues at Luzon—land, offload, and get out.

Service Area—that includes Pope and most of the surrounding area. That really alters our operations. It's made our training more difficult. Beyond that, there are a lot of bugsmashers around here," Captain Griffin continued.

"Simmons Army Airfield (about 6 miles south) has a lot of helicopter traffic—it's the busiest Army airfield in the world," interjected Major Lambert. "The helos are doing nap of the earth, and at night are on NVGs. They may not be on the same radio frequency as us; you have to keep your eyes open around here."

Meeting all military and civilian airspace requirements presents a real challenge for everyone. The Army needs helicopter corridors between Simmons and restricted areas southwest and west of Pope's

Runway 23. Those corridors conflict with approaches to Pope's Runway 05 and changed Pope's plans to develop south departures off Runway 23. The 317th also had to change their recovery routes from LZs and DZs on the south side of the Fort Bragg training area.

Traffic conflicts don't just apply to the southern parts of the Fort Bragg area, however. "The helicopter corridors come right through northern areas, too," said Major Lambert. "The Army has a huge volume of traffic going through there. We like the idea of having Fayetteville watching the transponders out there and keeping us separated." The new ARSA will certainly enhance flight safety. There's continuous competition for limited airspace around Fort Bragg and Fayetteville.

We made some firsthand observations of the traffic situation during a trip to Luzon LZ to watch C-130 operations on a dirt strip. On the way, our truck was "strafed" several times by Army Cobra and Apache gunships, and we saw almost continual traffic in the area—Blackhawks, Chinooks, Hueys—veritable tribes of helicopters scurrying around during the exercise.

At Luzon, we watched several C-130s land, amidst clouds of red dust, and disgorge their loads of Army vehicles. According to Captain Griffin, "This is probably the most fun pilots have. No computers, no courses, no timing, just eyeballs and judgment." From what I saw on Luzon's 3,500 ft of hard red clay, the pilots were doing their "pilot stuff" pretty well. We also looked at one end of the LZ in response to a report from a pilot about difficulty judging where to do 180-degree turns at night. Most FSOs only have to worry about one or two runways on the home base; Pope's have to worry about safety at numerous LZs and DZs in an area bigger than some states. The safety folks inspect LZs and DZs at least quarterly and before any exercise. The Army is in charge of maintaining the zones and does a good job. For example, the 82d had one of its engineering battalions in Honduras, so Luzon LZ got in pretty rough shape. Everyone at Pope and Fort Bragg were aware of the situation and stayed off the LZ. But just before MARKET SQUARE, they sent engineers in to start from scratch and get it back in shape. One of Pope's mottos is "We Put the Air in Airborne" and the Army makes sure the folks at Pope can get their part of the job done.

More heritage—the C-123 Provider.

One of the things that distinguishes Pope from other C-130 units is the fact its aircraft are AWADS equipped. AWADS stands for Adverse Weather Aerial Delivery System, and has greatly enhanced Pope's airdrop capability. According to Captain Griffin, "Tying the new PINS (Precision Inertial Navigation System) into the radar has really brought drop scores down to the point that now if you're beyond 100 yards there are some raised eyebrows."

Pope wasn't built to handle modern-day aircraft or the traffic volume the base often experiences. According to Captain Griffin, "This is an old airfield with a lot of limitations, especially when we get a C-5 in. If we have an operation like MARKET SQUARE, we have a strategic ALCE and safety officer come in so we have some C-141 expertise." One example of the tight quarters sometimes experienced at Pope is the tight squeeze around Green Ramp when troops line up along the west edge in preparation for loading. If the troops move too close to the ramp's edge, there's insufficient wingtip clearance for C-141s to taxi by—the wingtips pass over the troops. Pope safety folks solved the problem by placing a row of concrete parking lot bumpers, as a reference line for troop commanders, far enough from the ramp's edge so C-141s have enough clearance.

There was also quite a bit of construction underway on Pope's ramps, some for repairs and some for expansion. So, as on any ramp, pay close attention to taxi instructions at Pope and keep your eyes moving. Pope's a busy place on the ground and in the air, and there are few places in the MAC world where there's as much intense airlift activity happening on a daily basis.

From what I saw, everyone at Pope is deeply involved in doing their complex and diverse mission safely and professionally. Pope also offers a unique opportunity to learn about, work with, and be neighbors of the truly professional officers and soldiers of the best and most ready division of the United States Army, the 82d Airborne. It's truly "Herky Heaven" and *the* place for C-130 folks to ply their trade.

(Editor's Comments:) Twenty-two years ago, *The MAC Flyer* published "The Ghost of Drifter's Reef." Recognized then as an exceptional and winning submission to the writing contest, we hope you'll agree it was an entertaining work of poetry with a safety message that sticks with its readers forever. This year, the same author has graciously provided the sequel, "Retired with Honor." Many of us have yet to down brew at the infamous *Drifter's*, in fact we probably never will. Furthermore, a lot of things have changed in the last 22 years, and many crewmembers who frequented this fabled saloon aren't flying with MAC anymore. Therefore, we've reprinted the original poem with this year's submission, and extend a warm invitation to enjoy:

Artwork by Dub Ba

Reprint of original artwork.

By Maj Grover C. Tate, Jr., (USAF, Ret)
Joshua, Texas

The Ghost of the Drifter's Reef

A bunch of MAC Flyers were whooping it up
On the shore of the Wake Lagoon,
Gathered together for story and song
In the Drifter's Reef Saloon,

Grousing at rules that kept them there
Instead of in Hono-lu;
Counting the hours remaining to drink
(How many? It's twelve plus two.)

When out of the rain and storm of the night,
And into the white lamp's glare,
There stumbled a man in raggedy greens
With sand in his beard and hair.

He looked like a crewman because of his garb,
This salt-crusted, storm-ravaged guest.
Some threads from a MAC patch, so faded and torn,
A sharp eye could find on his chest.

The place grew quite still as he walked to the bar
And croaked out an order for gin.
Then clutching his glass in his coral-scarred hand,
He eyed every man jack therein.

His eyes were of green, like the depths of the sea,
And they looked as though set in a well.
And those orbs had a message for all who could see
That this man knew the torments of hell.

The hand raised the glass, and his lips found the rim;
A thin trickle poured down his chin.
Then, smoothing his beard with the back of his wrist,
He coughed and said, "Let me begin."

"It all started back in the days of cadets,
In the years before black shoes and blues.
Instead of me choosing to fly like a man,
I majored in women and booze.

"I guess I was lucky; I know I got help,
And somehow I made my way through.
Then one sunny day someone pinned on my wings
And told me "It's all up to you."

"Of all of the places I could have been sent,
Like Training Command, TAC or SAC,
They gave me the job that I wanted the most—
I'd spend my years flying for MAC.

"And when I checked in, Oh! so eager to start,
They scheduled me back into school.
But I was a hot rock and I knew it all,
So I spent my time at the pool.

"To heck with procedures for three-engine climb,
It's easy to see we got four.
Just line up this beast with the wind on her nose
While the engineer lays on full bore.

"Who cares, reasoned I, where the fuses are hid,
Who cares for the words that spell PAM?
Just show me about where the throttles are at,
And it's off to the blue, like Shazam!

"It's never my worry to preflight the bird;
Leave that for the maintenance toad.
And get him to sign off those silly red marks;
We must get this show on the road.

"And all of this jazz about planning the flight!
Half-way makes a good E-T-P.
Just tell me, old boss, where the cargo must go
And then leave the flying to me.

"At last I returned to my unit again,
And begged them to please let me fly.
They needed a man on that very same eve
To go bore a hole in the sky.

"The night was as black as a coal miner's sock,
When our plane roared away toward sea.
Then the nav stuck his hand through the drapes at my back
With a message to give M-C-C.

"I glanced with surprise at the words on the sheet
Which the 'gator said *had* to be sent,
'Cause the place we were going was known to all hands,
And so was the time we had went.

"So I laid it on top of 'Procedures, En route,'
And wadded them all in a bunch,
Then tossed it aside while I levelled her off
And called for my first in-flight lunch.

"In the mellow white light from the thunderstorm lamp
I glanced at the man 'cross the aisle.
I knew in a flash that we'd sure get along,
'Cause his face held the trace of a smile.

"His arms dangled down by the side of his seat,
His chest made a rest for his head,
And the sound of his snores as we bored through the night
Gave me confidence I couldn't shed.

"It was only an hour, as best I recall,
When: 'Pilot, we've lost number 2'
Came crackling over the interphone wire;
I *instantly* knew what to do.

" 'Press on, I replied, in my best pilot tone,
Four minus one still leaves three.'
'But sir,' came the voice of our first engineer,
'Let's go back to Travis, prithee?'

" 'Quite right,' said the 'gator, quick joining the fray,
'The book says go back toward the sun.'
'What book, lad?' I asked in a fatherly voice.
His answer: 'MAC fifty-five one.'

" "The equal time point still lies over our nose;
Make a one-eighty, please,' cried the nav,
'We're going to Hickam, Magellan,' I yelled,
'And no more of your lip will I have.'

"The silence right then was a welcome relief,
And for minutes the feeling was grand,
Then a voice said 'Our fuel isn't going to last,
You better start looking for land.'

"Then the 'gator chimed in with a worrisome note,
'Pardon me; you're three AIREPS in debt.'
I took a deep breath, then in leadership tones,
Answered, 'Gentlemen, negative sweat.'

"Behind us the dawn was attacking the night;
We flew on in an ocean of grey.
The clouds which had covered the stars from our sight
Now were hiding the sun the same way.

"The man on my left shook himself from his snooze
And requested the last status quo.
I flashed him the sign that *okay* was the word
And we only had three hours to go.

"I told him one engine was taking a rest,
And fuel was not overly fat,
But we had a heading that seemed mighty good,
And he could take comfort from that.

"I mentioned the AIREPS that hadn't been sent,
The radar that acted so sick,
The fact that the 'gator had lost his Loran,
The radio's clickety-click.

"I knew by the way that he sagged in his seat,
That to him it must all be a joke.
('Twas later I learned, from a medical tech,
That the poor chap had suffered a stroke.)

"To wrap it all up in a couple of words,
And to save you the gory remarks,
We DR'd our way to some ATC steers
And we managed to outfox the sharks.

"I greased in the bird on the runway they named,
Then taxied her in to the ramp.
The fellers who met me when I touched the ground,
Had hands awful clammy and damp.

"They read me the regs I had broken and bent,
They showed me the rules I'd ignored.
They hit me with everything under the sun,
And left me, quite lit'rally, floored.

"They tied me with chains on my hands and my feet;
I was laid in a casket-like box.
Then they fastened the lid with a handful of spikes
And they wrapped on more chain, using locks.

"Ten hours in the back of a one-twenty four,
Then they pitched out my 'coffin' near Wake.
The box split in two as it hit on the reef,
And I floated ashore like a snake.

"No one sees me here but the members of crews,
'Cause to them I'm a lesson retold.
I only appear in the dark of the night,
When the weather is low, damp and cold.

"And so, my MAC friends, buy me something to drink,
Heed my story of ruin and rack.
Please remember the man who goes forth without smarts,
Will eventually never come back."

He paused; in a flash someone refilled his glass
And he gulped down the drink with a smile.
Then he left as he came, in a flurry of wind,
For his home on the tiny Wake isle.

I am sure he's still there, this outcast from a crew
With his raggedy greens and his beard.
And whenever you sit in the Drifter's Reef Bar
Keep an eye peeled for something quite weird.

For I reckon he'll never be able to leave
Until all of our men get to look
And to hear him recite his sad, heart-rending tale
Of the man who knew more than The Book.

★

By Maj Grover C. Tate, Jr., (USAF, Ret)
Joshua, Texas

In the castle by the river
In sainted old D.C.
Papers were being shuffled
Among the troops in AD (administration).

It was on a Friday afternoon,
The weekend was on hand
When the halls echoed a loud scream
Heard throughout the land.

Who the hell filed this form?
Asking for retirement this day?
Some nut living on Wake Island
Wants retirement plus 30 years of back pay.

The listed name is just plain "ghost."
Address is Wake Island Lagoon
Place of duty is listed
As the *Drifter's Reef Saloon.*

Claims that he once was a pilot
Who made one tiny, tiny mistake
That he was tossed out in a box
In the surf of the island of Wake.

Now, after all of these years there
Wants retirement and a parade
The silliest request for retirement
That has ever been made.

Throw all of these forms away
Put them in the burn sack
This obvious, ridiculous counterfeit
Is the work of some quack.

Just as the AD guy gave this order
A four-star with ribbons galore,
Caused a call to attention
As he strode through the AD room door.

What's all of the shouting and racket
Coming from this paperwork den?
The AD man retreated, cowered,
And then sadly began.

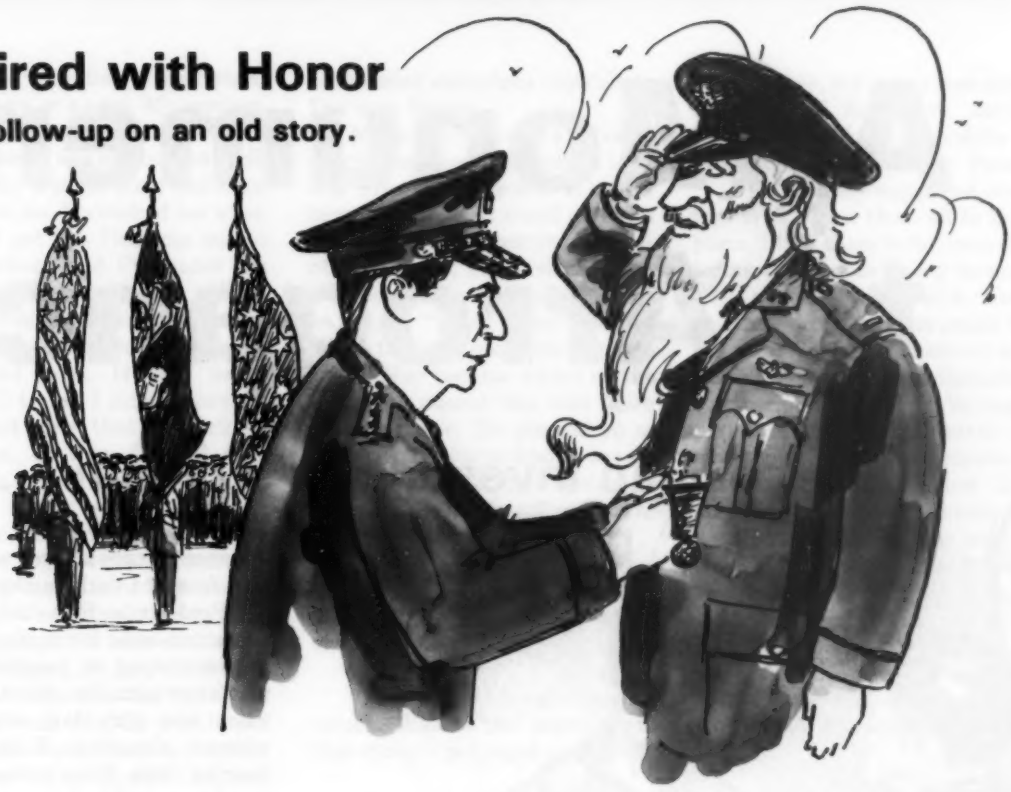
He told of the ghost story,
Of the retirement plan prank,
Of how after 32 years of service
The ghost was still a lieutenant in rank.

The general's eyes grew very hard
And he tightly gritted his teeth
Is this man by any chance
The Ghost of the Old Drifter's Reef?

Special Category

Retired with Honor

A follow-up on an old story.



Assured that the form said only "Ghost"
The general broke in broad smile
And announced he knew this man
Assigned alone to Wake Isle.

Oh, he was ragged and dirty,
Wore a tattered old MAC patch,
Hair and beard matted with salt and sand
Sandals that didn't match.

He was thrown out on that island
By the crew of an old -124
Sentenced to be there forever
Never to fly anymore.

He had screwed up at every turn
Compromised safety of aircraft and crew
Then dumped out on lonely Wake
With nothing but one thing to do.

He had to meet each incoming flight
Share a drink and startle all there
Teach each aircrew that flying
Was more than a wing and a prayer.

His messages were handed down
By all the thousands who passed through,
Telling over and over that flight safety
Was primary to each and every crew.

He always ended his barroom lectures
With a lesson well-learned
That he who flies without smarts
Is doomed to not return.

Now the jet crews bypass tiny Wake
Where he wanders all alone
He has served his assignment
Let's bring the old boy home.

Give this man a meritorious medal
The general ordered, signing the request.
For among all the flight safety officers
The old ghost was the very best.

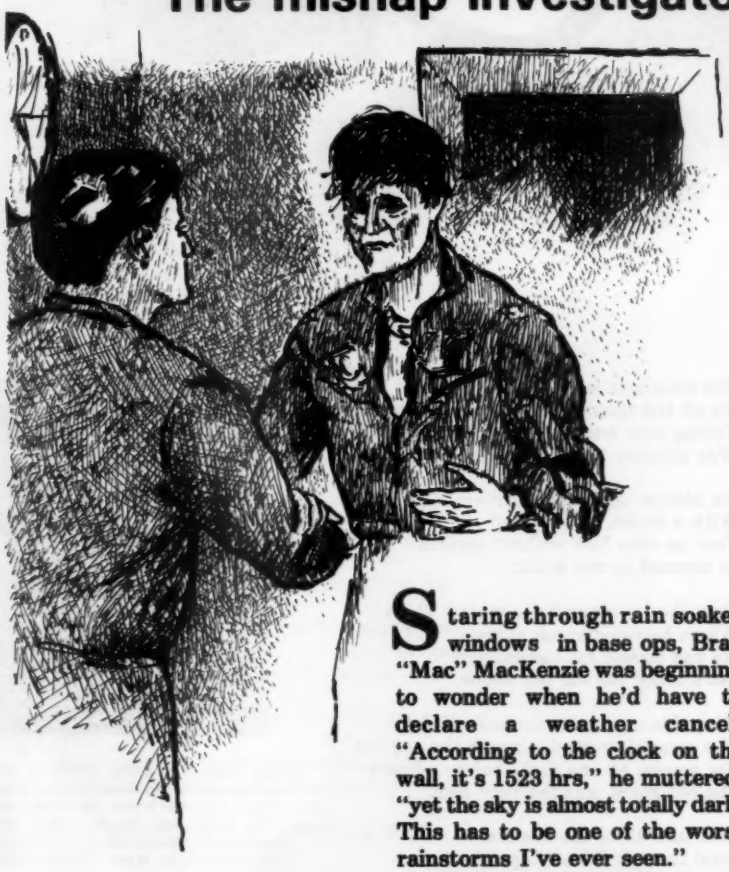
Give him all of the benefits
Send them to Wake Lagoon
The old MAC ghost served with honor
In *THE DRIFTER's REEF SALOON.*

Maj. Tate, a constant winner in our writing contest, continues to enjoy life in Texas. A prolific writer, his latest book "The Tenderfoot Bandits" was just published in Arizona. We at *TMF* always look forward to Major Tate's contributions.

1988 MAC Flight Safety Writing Contest

A Monument to Arrogance

The mishap investigator's dream . . .



Staring through rain soaked windows in base ops, Brad "Mac" MacKenzie was beginning to wonder when he'd have to declare a weather cancel. "According to the clock on the wall, it's 1523 hrs," he muttered, "yet the sky is almost totally dark. This has to be one of the worst rainstorms I've ever seen."

Just then, Mac became aware of someone else entering the room. When he turned, he was surprised to see Maj. Fred Johnson. His flight suit was completely soaked and in places was muddy and torn. The most striking aspect of Major Johnson's appearance was the pale face and dark, sunken eyes.

Fred spoke first, but out of character, as he is usually loud, if not obnoxious, to practically all who know him. But this time his voice was very low, almost a whisper, almost as if Mac was hearing him from across the aerodrome rather than across the room. "Hello Mac, considering flying?"

"Yeah, I guess so," Mac replied. "But it certainly doesn't look too promising. We're an hour from burn out, and the forecaster has kept the measured ceiling at 100 ft. What in the world have you been doing that got you so wet?"

"I just came through that weather on the ILS," Major Johnson replied, with words so slow and quiet it sounded like a last breath.

"You gotta be kidding me!" Mac exclaimed. "This is the worst storm I've seen this year. What in the world were you doing in it?"

"Well Mac," Major Johnson stated, "you knew what I was like. You know I was always pretty independent. I considered myself a regular 'John Wayne,' a

maverick who didn't need regs, tech orders, or a crew. My greatest skill was in my hands. I had been flying since I was eleven. The thrill of the sky was all there had been in life for me. It crushed me when I didn't get the Phantom out of flight school, and I've hated the image of the cargo plane, the so-called advice from flight engineers and copilots, the henpecking of command post. It just never occurred to me I might possibly need that crew, that rule written in blood, or that I could ever possibly exceed my capability."

Mac was caught quite by surprise by Major Johnson's startling confession. This wasn't all that was going through his mind though; he was wondering lots of things. Like how did he land in this storm, how did his flight suit get torn, why the past tense, and would he tell this at a safety meeting. Mac couldn't resist. "What's brought on all this philosophy?" he asked.

It was as if Major Johnson didn't even hear that question. "Do you remember that study about accidents? The one where the aircraft commander's leadership style determined the crew's performance? I didn't believe their conclusions. What a burst of BS, I *thought*. Imagine, a crew would fold their arms and look out the window while an aircraft commander killed them."

"Yeah, well, the conclusions were pretty well verified," Mac said. "An aircraft commander can intimidate his or her crew to the point where they just don't care anymore. It seems kinda funny, but the crewmember will subconsiously accept suicide rather than argue with an obnoxious thickhead." After saying that, Mac thought to himself, oh no! I don't believe I just said that to one of the most obnoxious thickheads I've ever known.

Major Johnson's facial expression never changed. In fact, Mac thought it was as if he hadn't heard him at all. It would give him an opportunity to get the foot out of his mouth. The last thing he wanted to do was cross this guy, he was a "world class" flamer. While this was going through his mind, Mac became aware of the deafening silence that had fallen between them. He glanced up at the clock, hoping to find an excuse to retreat from this potential disaster. The hands still pointed to 1523—*it had stopped!*

"You know Mac," Major Johnson spoke, "I was an obnoxious thickhead."

Uh oh, Mac thought, here it comes. What's the matter with that clock, I gotta get outta here!

"That's right, but it doesn't say it all." Major Johnson again spoke softly and without emotion. "Egotistical, self-centered—stupid! Add those, too. And don't forget murderer."

"Whoa!" Mac said. "Take it easy on yourself."

"No, it's too late for that," Major Johnson responded after another long pause. "It was one of those O-dark-thirty takeoffs for a 45 minute flight to Camp Tarpley for load training. I used to think those were such a waste of time, eight hours on the ground, baby sitting grunts.

"When it was time to leave, the nav and copilot thought we ought to check the weather. Imagine that, some garbage about it being in the reg. Then the engineer does another walk-around. I always operated under the philosophy if you look for trouble, you'll find it. Never wanting any, my policy was never to look. Well, his wasn't, and he found some. A large puddle of prop fluid under Number Three.

"He actually suggested staying. Well, I put them all in their place. I told them in no uncertain terms that I was flying home. I was *not* checking with some weather forecaster who would tell me what I already knew—it was raining and there was lightning. Furthermore, I wasn't letting a puddle of fluid keep me out of the air—the prop would pitchlock as advertised and we could land three-engine without a problem. I went on to tell them I was leaving, they could come along if they wanted, or they could stay, I didn't need any of them anyway."

"A little stiff there, don't you think?" Mac started to get somewhat perturbed with what he was hearing.

"It got worse," the pale major said. "When we were taxiing out, the copilot announced that his flight director had quit. I told him I hadn't seen evidence of where in the world he'd gotten the idea he could fly instruments anyway. Of course I hadn't let him fly any either. I iced that sour cake by telling him that that's why the primary system is the pilot's, and his was only an expensive, useless backup."

Mac looked at him with horror. He couldn't believe this guy was this bad; and wondered how in the world he got through this weather.

"That's not all," the major went on. "I directed the engineer to put Number Three in mechanical. I told him I was sharp enough to get the emergency procedure out of the way now, rather than wait until it happened.

"Emergency procedure, ah!"

The major showed his first emotion. "Imagine those wimps calling that an emergency procedure.

"Well, the engineer started to become quite insubordinate. He said something to the effect that he'd had enough of this *%$*&. This whole bonehead argument started while I was taxiing to the runway. The nav interrupts it all by saying he's painting cells off the departure end of the runway, and actually has the gall to call Metro on UHF 2 without my permission. Says there's a squall line crossing our intended route and severe frontal weather across the entire state.

"I told him to shut off that worthless radar, it's obviously attenuated; and don't ever transmit out of this airplane again without my permission. We still got daylight and I'll get us through the thunderbumpers as easily as my mother threads a needle."

Mac couldn't believe his ears, and couldn't contain himself any longer. "You've got to be kidding me! Didn't you know what you were doing?"

Another long silence fell between them, broken when the major spoke. "There was more. The nav said if I didn't want his radar, his skills, or his help, he'd just move to the back of the airplane. 'Good,' I said, 'it's got little to do with whether I want your help, nav. Fact is, I don't need it.' I went on to tell him that I didn't know why we've kept his crew position in the first place. The only thing I ever got from navigators was grief about why we couldn't do something. Then the engineer speaks up again. 'That's it,' he says. 'I've had enough of this suicide mission, Major. Since I probably don't contribute either, why don't you stop this thing right here. I think I'd rather walk.'

"That kinda got me by surprise. Then the nav said he was getting off too, followed by both loadmasters saying they're quitting along with them. 'A *mutiny*' I laughed aloud! Then I said, 'Well, watch this you cowardly s o b's while I cobbed the power and screamed down the runway. When I felt comfortable, I rotated and reached over and raised the gear and flaps.

'Anybody that wants off my airplane can leave now!' I laughed as we climbed out. I was so tickled with the shocked expressions on their faces."

"I've heard more than enough, Major Johnson." Mac interrupted. "I'll have to talk to your crew and report this."

For the first time, the major responded quickly. "You'll get your chance MacKenzie, but there's more.

"When we got overhead, Approach Control announces the 100-ft measured ceiling and recommends a divert. I laughed at her too, and said we were Cat II equipped and qualified, and we'd take the ILS thank you. Boy, I wish you could've seen the excitement *that* drew from my mutinous crew. These were the first words spoken since I rolled back at Tarpley.

"What could they do? The copilot didn't have instruments, they couldn't afford to beat me over the head, I was their only chance of surviving this, and I told them so.

"By this time, nobody was doing anything but sitting there. I configured the plane. What the hell, since nobody was talking, we didn't need a checklist. Then Approach Control started hasseling me. Said she's never heard of one of our home station -130s that was Cat II equipped or qualified and wanted me to confirm it. I told her to go home and raise her kids and get out of this line of work. Then a man's voice came on the line and said, if I was equipped, I was cleared the ILS approach, Category II."

"I don't believe I'm hearing this," Mac said in total shock.

"And you'll wonder *how* you did for the rest of your life MacKenzie." The major's voice was stern and forceful. Then he looked up at the stopped clock, Mac did too. At that moment the second hand began to move again. The major glanced back at Mac and said, "I've got to go now." Then his voice faded. "I just never knew." Before Mac knew it, the major had gone. It was as if he'd vanished into thin air. Mac was in total shock. That whole scene didn't seem to make sense. It almost felt as though he'd been dreaming, except that it was so cold in the room.

Almost as if a hand had reached and spun his head around, he quickly looked out the window toward the approach end of the runway in time to see a C-130 drop out of the clouds, very low, and not aligned with the runway. He heard the engines scream as if begging for one last opportunity to fly. Then the aircraft violently smashed into the ground beside the runway. It skidded mercilessly, breaking to pieces as flames and huge, thick columns of black smoke began to swallow it whole. It came to rest about midway down the field. By this time, there was nothing more than a huge bonfire—a monument to arrogance.

Mac was weak and horrified. He had to steady himself against the window sill. Almost trembling out of control, he looked at the now running clock. It was 1524.

A 3,000-Ton Fish Story

Luckily, this big one got away!

By Maj. Steve McCauley
Associate Editor

"We all should have died on that mission, Stan. It was only God's Grace that saved us from catastrophe."

"Well, Gary, sounds like your near-miss with death renewed your religious ethic. How about telling the story in printable fashion, so my readership can share in the excitement and lessons of your experience."

(*Hello*, readers! This is Stan Muldoon, aviation safety journalist, banging out another of those thrilling tales told by fliers who want their message passed along, but would rather not take the credit—if you know what I mean. Today, I'm hearing one from an old friend of mine who had a little incident while trying to use his helicopter's rescue hoist to lift a 3,000-ton ship. Sound like a fun trip? Well, read on!)

"Now, from the beginning, Gary. Let's have all the details on the mission and your narrow escape from death's greedy clutches. And don't omit that interesting detail about the miswired switch that, ironically, saved your lives."

"Stan, I was brand new to the unit. In fact, I was the only second lieutenant on base—an honor I would have preferred to let go unnoticed. Fresh out of helicopter school, I felt confident in my basic abilities as a helicopter pilot; particularly in performing tricky precision hover operations. However, being new to the Huey 'gunship model,' I was not yet completely familiar with the hoist/armament panel and associated 'red guarded' switches.

"The call came at an early hour on a Saturday morning. Though we weren't actually a Rescue unit, our squadron eagerly performed such missions whenever the opportunity arose. This was to be my very first! I donned my green bag and was busy lacing the flight boots as I simultaneously talked to ComPost and copied mission data. Nathan, our 10-month-old toddler, sensed the excitement. He escaped his mother's grasp during a diaper changing ritual and scrambled over to me, attentively grinning while he clung to my knee. As I hung up the phone, I took a deep breath to slow the adrenalin. The warm sensation around my right foot seemed odd. One squishy step resolved that mystery. Nathan, naked as a jaybird, had surreptitiously irrigated the inside of my boot. Time was critical, so I only had time to hunt up a fresh change of socks. Maybe I should have considered it an omen."

"Cute anecdote, Gary. But I'm not sure about the safety message in that digression. Let's go to the flying part."

"I was impressed by his dexterity but fearful of the consequences."

"Right, Stan. Down at the flightline, the AC had rotors turning before I even finished my preflight walk around. He was a crusty old major with a reputation for being a bit hyper. Since he was the chief pilot, I looked forward to this opportunity to demonstrate my airmanship skills. He launched our machine towards the open sea just as I plugged into the intercom, and then began his staccato-paced briefing on the task before us. We were to locate a merchant vessel 75 miles off shore and assist three seamen suffering toxic fumes inhalation. The AC conducted his briefing monologue without interruption. He covered every minor parameter and contingency for his own part in the mission but left out the rest of the crew. Significantly, he also omitted any mention of emergency procedures.

"Chain smoking with furious determination, he lit his Luckies while delicately holding the cyclic (stick) between his knees. I was impressed by his dexterity, but fearful of the consequences, since he insisted on flying with the force trim 'off.' The hoist operator, a steady and experienced NCO, did mention

the fire hazard associated with internal fuel bladders, but his comment was disregarded. We also had a flight surgeon aboard who seemed totally awestruck by his first helicopter flight. The AC occasionally seemed to solicit an input from the crew, but was always quick to provide his own response. He even managed an isolated attempt at humor, mumbling something about how his singularly quick reflexes were the key to his prowess as a helicopter pilot.

"We spotted the ship after more than an hour of flight at VNE. Our crew's anxiety was at a peak. Since direct radio contact with the ship wasn't possible, we circled twice to coax it to slow down from full speed and, hopefully, head 30 degrees into the wind. Finally, the ship stopped dead in the water, and didn't change course. Her bow pitched heavily on 8-ft swells. Our AC hovered our chopper over the ship's stern and ordered the litter basket lowered by the hoist in our right door. Though the AC couldn't see any part of the ship except the top of the mast visible through my door window, he ignored my offer to hold our 50-ft hover using the better references available to me in the left seat.

"Before the litter basket even reached the deck, our hoist operator advised that sailors on the deck were signaling for us to depart. We recovered the litter as the AC muttered, 'This *has* to be the right ship!' Still struggling to maintain a hover which was

becoming less stable with every gust of wind, he ordered a hand-scrawled message be lowered on the hoist cable. A reply message was eventually retrieved and indicated assistance was no longer required. Determined our efforts not be wasted, the AC directed another message be lowered asking if we might send down our flight surgeon to examine the patients. As that message was being dispatched, the flight surgeon spoke on intercom for the first time and indicated some reservation about riding the hoist. Upon hearing this, the AC expressed considerable displeasure, but ordered the hoist cable retrieved just as it reached the ship's deck.

"Suddenly, our helicopter began a series of wrenching, rolling jerks. I heard the shrill whine of engines straining to turn rotor blades forced to bend at increasing pitch angles as the AC pulsed his collective lever. The violent motions threw me against my door. The AC shouted, 'Tail rotor failure! We're ditching!' He vainly wrestled the controls to achieve a level attitude prior to water impact.

"Everything seemed to go into slow motion. I lost sight of the ship and the horizon. All I could see was the ocean surface—and from a very close and uncomfortable attitude! I wanted to grab for the flight controls. Instead, my right hand found a red cover guarding a switch on the center console. I couldn't really identify the switch, since it was exactly like several others on the armament panel. A blurred thought raced by: 'The AC might order some switch be activated to cut the hoist cable. No, our hoist operator had reported the cable was on its way up, so it must be fully retrieved by now.' For no explainable reason, I raised the protective cover, but with absolutely *no* intention of activating the switch concealed beneath it.

"A loud 'BANG' interrupted the confusion. What seemed a perfect silence followed. Our helicopter was now stabilized in a peaceful hover a few feet above the water's surface, but also rather close to the ship. Looking around, I saw our hoist operator, tethered by the strap of his gunner's belt, climb in through the right cabin opening. After connecting his interphone, he explained the mystery of what had *really* happened: As the hoist cable was being raised, it became entangled and lashed securely to the ship's railing. The ship, descending into the trough of a swell, had pulled us down with it. The hoist operator was yanked out of the helicopter by the first violent jerks, and his interphone cord disconnected. He'd been unable to reach the cable-cut switch at his own station.

"During the long, quiet flight home, I glanced down at the red guarded switch on the center console. *It had been activated!* Closer inspection revealed a thin strand of copper safety wire attached to the red cover and looped around the switch. Normally, that safety is only fastened to an anchor screw on the console to prevent inadvertent lifting of the cover. It had been miswired, so merely raising the cover had activated the switch and *guillotined the cable*!"

"So, Gary, you made no conscious decision to actually cut that cable when you did?"

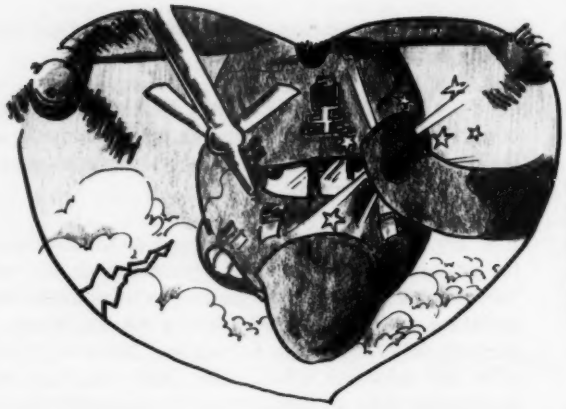
"No way! Not with *that* AC. Unless he gave the command to do it first, I wouldn't have considered it. In retrospect, I thank God the cover *was* attached directly to the switch!"

"By the way, when things appeared to slow down for you, that was probably a phenomenon we call 'temporal distortion.' It enabled you to evaluate the situation and react carefully during the emergency—perhaps only on instinct. Sometimes, however, it can have the opposite effect, and panic can turn an emergency into a catastrophe. We certainly thank you for sharing the story with us, Gary!"

A few flight safety observations are in order here: Adaptation and innovation during the course of a mission is generally regarded as a positive thing. However, there are limits—especially when all participants haven't enjoyed the benefit of special training or, at least, a careful 'dry run' rehearsal in preparation. Dropping messages down a hoist cable falls into that category. Same goes for dropping a flight surgeon onto a ship's deck. Sure, a "life or death" rescue mission generates a lot of "can do" enthusiasm; as does any high priority/high visibility mission. However, when too many procedures become "nonstandard," it's time to back off and reevaluate the situation and the priorities. Though the AC in this story had a plan, his overbearing nature stifled crew interaction and initiative. The rest of the crew didn't really know what to expect next, or what to do if everything went wrong. Emergency procedures *always* warrant review and discussion before undertaking hazardous maneuvers. Divine intervention in the form of a miswired safety cover saved the crew here. Better to have not allowed the situation to deteriorate to the point where only God *could* save them!

Well, all you intrepid darlings of the airways—hope you've been able to take a lesson from this installment. Every pilot has a good tale of his own, to be sure. So, *go ahead. Send it in!* Until next time then, this has been Stan Muldoon *wishing you safe skies and mission success!* ✈

A "NOT SO ROMANTIC" RENDEZVOUS!

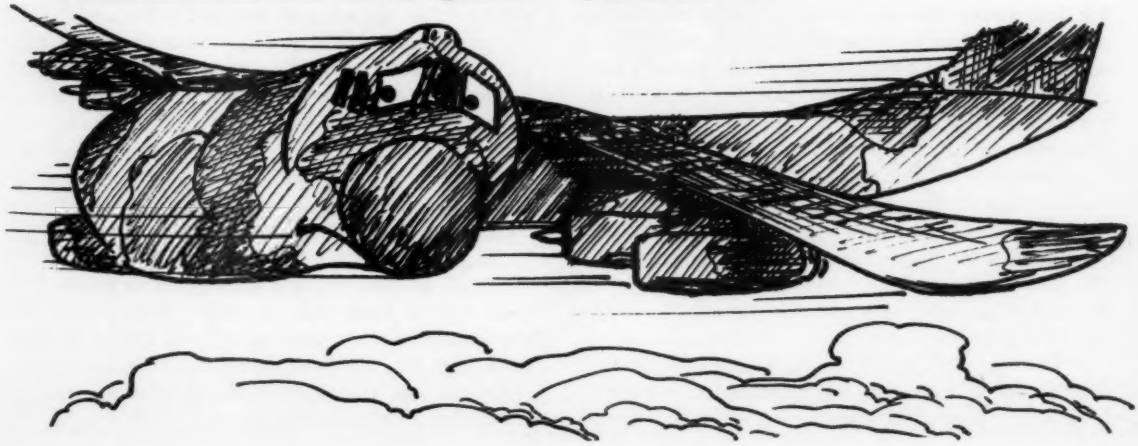


The tanker and receiver met as planned. As the receiver started to move forward, following the receiver director lights, the boom hit said receiver's left front windscreen. A breakaway was immediately initiated.

Erratic receiver inputs, boom operator inexperience in refueling a C-130, or a combination of both may have been responsible for the aggravating, unwelcomed contact. The tanker's boom was undamaged, but it left an 8-inch scratch on the receiver's windshield. Is this what we mean by "being on the receiving end?"

REVERSE THRUST IN FLIGHT

The C-141 was designed to fly using forward thrust from all four of its powerful jet engines. However, as a crew which recently departed Shemya will attest, unforeseen modifications to design "thrust-drag ratio" sometimes occur. Climbing through FL 230 at 280 knots, the crew heard a loud bang, immediately followed by left yaw and illumination of "Number 1 Thrust Rev Extended" warning light. Attempts to close the thrust reverser proved futile, so Number 1 engine was shut down, and normal rated thrust set on the three good engines. The crew experienced buffeting above 215 knots, so climb was continued at 210 knots for divert to Elmendorf. Controllability checks during descent were followed by an uneventful landing. Thorough review of aircraft records revealed four previous discrepancies on the number 1 T/R. A causal factor in this mishap was failure of the top thrust reverser actuator clevis. Fortunately for all concerned, failure occurred during a non critical portion of flight and the crew responded with customary MAC professionalism.



AFTER DEADLINES

CONTRACT AWARDED FOR NEW FLIGHT INSPECTION AIRCRAFT--Aeronautical System Division awarded a $70 million contract to LTV Missile and Electronics Group for the procurement of 6 C-29As. The commercial version, BAe 125-800, twin engine jet is built by British Aerospace and will replace the aging C-140 flight check aircraft, formerly operated by Air Force Communications Command. MAC now operates the mission which checks and calibrates instrument landing equipment at military airfields. Flight inspection aircraft also establish ground navigational and air traffic control systems during crisis and quick-reaction situations. Deliveries begin in June 89 and will be complete by Mar 90. Aircraft will be based at Scott AFB, Illinois; Rhein-Main AB, West Germany; and Yokota AB, Japan.

ROSE COLORED GLASSES ARE PREFERABLE TO BLUE--Many sunglasses now on the market are designed to filter out a significant portion of the blue light spectrum. Such sunglasses should not be worn when using color radar because they may filter out too much blue from the color radar screen. This may distort your view of color, leading you to misinterpret data presented via different colors (i.e. with such sunglasses, the color magenta would appear red). *The Cockpit.*

WE STILL NEED ONE--An editor , that is! We need someone to be a proud editor of the world's best flight safety magazine, *The MAC Flyer*. The job is exciting, challenging, and rewarding. When asked what you do for a living, your answer, "I'm an editor on *The MAC Flyer* staff" is received with an appreciative "Aaaaah!" We're looking for a rated major/captain with a strong desire to write. Flight safety experience, although not essential, is a plus. If interested, contact Major Tom Weinzierl, Supervising Editor, HQ MAC/IGFE, Scott AFB, Illinois, 62225-5101 Call AV 576-3534/5542 or (618) 256-3534.

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TOUCH N GO

I wonder what happened to the Goat we hit on the runway last night?
"BURGER Supreem-O"
"OH NO!"